A LITLE STONE, Out of the MOUNTAIN.

CHURCH-ORDER briefly opened,

BY

Nicholas Lockyer,
Minister of the Gospel.

EZEK. 47. 3.
the waters were to the ancles.

PSAL. 27. 4.
One thing have I desired, &c.

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To the LORDS afflicted People in SCOTLAND,

Be tender mercy by JESUS CHRIST.

Dear Brethren,

WE *have been in one furnace together, and under one cruell Tyrant and Task-master together, whose* anger did tear perpetually, and who kept his wrath for ever. *How blessed a thing now would it be, if we could all refine together under*

Amos I. 11

the Lords hand, and so become one staff of beauty and bonds, for the great Works of these latter dayes. The processions of things to this end, hath not pleased you all, but not for want of will (I assure you) in the poor agents, but for want of skill to compass you and their great affairs. But what is the pleasure of the Lord in all this? And how may we understand and comport with it? Such beatings of heart, how sweet would they keep our souls, under very hard and bitter things? Bitter things alone, lean and shrivell such as will feed alone upon them; which is a disease (I doubt) amongst many of Gods dear ones at this day, which makes them like thin fleshed folks, so fretfull and angry at every thing. You are brought into the wilderness, look to

that

that high Hand which indeed hath done this, & here dwel, and you may have vineyards from hence: great gain from your great loss, your wilderneſſe turned into ſuch pleaſant vineyards for ſoul and body, as yet Scotland never ſaw: Such proſpect is the daily entertainment, and heavenly viſion, of an inſtructed ſoul under Gods hand.

Dear Brethren, I beſeech you therefore in the bowels of Chriſt, receive inſtruction by your Correction; for the people which do not underſtand, ſhall fall. Hoſ. 4 14 *Tis a fire of jealouſie that burnes, it kindled in the Sanctuary, and there it yet flames, and I fear yet will, becauſe it findes ſo much hay and ſtubble upon the foundation, and ſo litle care and life yet to remove it. The fire of jea-*

lonsie is not a flash, quickly gone; tis a strange fire, tis the rage of God, and wil set his polluted Spouse as in the day she was born, *if she repent not: and then will* Israel *be* Jesrael, *a scattered forlorn State, for Tsiim and Ohim, for all howling creatures and complaints. God will* recover his wooll, *take from us his kindnesse, our enjoyments, opportunities, hearts, and in a* moneth *do this: and then twill be worse then now: when God shall say,* afflict no more, let no man strive nor reprove one another, *because twill make men worse,* Hos. 4.4. *This (I fear) God puts to his heart, that* Scotland *all this while is* not guilty. *Good people fret and rage, throw darts and javelins, to pin poor instruments next them*

Hos. 2. 3. compare Ezek. 16 4.

Hos. 5. 7.

them to the walls; which practice, whispers in the ears of God, we are not guilty: *which may make* Scotland *abide many dayes, not only without a King, and without a Prince, but without a sacrifice, and without a Teraphim, without their best and highest mercies, as well as without common temporeall honors and enjoyments: Tis three transgressions to despise the Word and works of God; and tis so many more to despise transgression; for in this,* blood toucheth bloods Amos 2.4. *as the Prophet speaks, one sin becomes many.*

Dear Brethren, stoop under Gods hand: God hath hedged up your way with thorns, and yet many of you seem by your carriage to say, we will go after our Lovers, our King, our Kirk, between which two mil-

stones, you may be ground to dust, if the Lord give you not spiritual understanding. Fear the Lord and his goodnesse: your rod hath been goodnesse; every twig, gentlenesse and goodnesse; hear the voyce thereof, and return to your first husband Jesus Christ, in your worship, in your dependence in all things; and cease from man, from your own wisdome which hath undone you, and from prejudice which will seal this state upon you, and bow down your backs always. Some of you (I fear) your doings will not suffer you to return, as the Prophet speaks: that is, you are so far engaged, that you think 'twill be your disgrace for ever, to retreat: but O Augustines retractations! what part of his Works, so sweet? And what a glory of a sudden would shine

Hos. 5. 4

shine from Heaven upon Scotland, in the sight of all the Christian world, if the Ministers and Christians thereof, would publish their Retractations of those harsh things, of which their pens, pulpits, and papers are full.

We are a people, an Island, saved by the Lord, and can be destroyed by none, but our selves: but surely, he that hath begun a glorious work amidst us, will perfect it, though many more of our carcases pay for it. I am as fearfull of our selves, who have now the ball before us, as of you who kick at us, whilst we are running after it; but the Lord will save us from you, and both of us from our selves, that he may exalt that free grace in which he began this Work, and bent both our hearts for himself unto it, and

bring

bring us to meet all at last, in some other land and work, wherein we shall more plainly see what we are about, and better agree; yea, and better understand then, what we are doing now. For this, for you, for us, night and day is he yet upon his knees, with prayers and tears, who is in all simplicity yours, in the service of the Gospel

NICHOLAS LOCKYER.

From my Quarters in *Edinburgh*, April. 20 1652.

To the Reader.

TIs remarkable, good Reader, how much GOD looks after the purity of his Worship, which most men think is but some mens stiffnesse, minding singularity, and punctilo's, more then the main. Tis ill to go to build without a foundation, and tis but ruinous to rest in a bottom without a top; a man shall dwell but coldly, in a house without a roof. If Gods house want but its glory, it may want its defence, as much as if it wanted its being, as to felicity in this world. When Samuel *did something about cleansing GODS worship, GOD did something against the* Philistims: *What he would have done he could not, because of the perverseneſſe of the people. In* Davids *time a full*

Reformation

Reformation was made and then GOD fully brought down all their Enemies, Philistims, *and all else round about. Upon this subject, thou wilt finde this little piece spend it self.*

See the last English Annot in 1 *Sam.* 7. 3 They did reform but in part, and so were delivered but in part by *Samuel* and *Saul*.

I have, Reader, *endeavoured to be thy spye, in reference to that good Land of Ordinance, which flowes with milk and hony: As to depth of discerning and judging in the Mysteries of Gospel-Worship, I confesse my self very weak, and can onely say as* Caleb *when he came back, from espying the Land, that* I have brought thee word as it was in my heart, *Indeed I have, indeed I have beloved* Reader: *As I have learned and be-*

lieved.

lieved, I have ſpoken; It may be with more plain-dealing, then ſome other of my Brethren who have wrote of this Subject, but take that ingenuouſly as the completion of my Spirit, as one deeply preſſed with the weight of theſe things, and the dangerous averſeneſſe of this poor people, among whom I have more heen and more ſeen, then ſome others of my Brethren have done. I write, Reader, againſt things, not perſons: All the LORDS People in Scotland are very dear unto me, with one little one of whom I cannot compare my ſelf, becauſe truly their little Ones are as David in ſome things, for affection and ſobriety, though in other things, yet dark. In Perſons of higher growth, I have obſerved eminent and excell-

cellent parts and graces, such as in the sweetnesse of which, I have found in my heart to live and die.

All that I have heavy upon my heart, respecting both the one and the other, is, that as to Church order, they are in an ill vessell, which cannot possible live, in such stormes as now beat upon it, from Heaven, and from the Saints; and therefore I could wish that all the godly were out on't. The love of this hath constrained me to labour and travell, even beyond my strength, that great thoughts of heart, against what the great GOD is now adoing, may fall, and GOD's People no more fal with that which is to fall, and is to be destroyed. They had their Masculine, and Feminine gods, Baal, and Ashteroth

teroth. *I hope* Baal *is become* Aſhteroth, *that that maſculine ſpirit which was for Presbyterie, growes Feminine; that ſome good people, more of love then of light, and others more of fear then of love, yet ly among the pots.* Reader, *think it thy duty to abate in affection, to things from which GOD is gone, and to abate in fury to them, who are going to Sion with their faces thitherward, who are ſeeking him whom their ſouls love: Let no Watch-man beat theſe, for GOD hath glorioufly ingaged to rebuke this ſpirit.*

Caleb *takes much notice that he was kept alive, when ſo many of his brethren were ſlain,* And now behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he ſaid theſe fourty five years, whilſt the children of Iſrael

rael wandred in the wilderneſſe, Joſh. 14. 7. *Surely, Reader, 'tis not for nought, that the Lord hath kept thee and I alive, in all this time wherein our brethren have been ſlain on every hand of us: much leſſe for worſe then nought, are we left; to live up that, for which they are dead. What is here offered to thee with the right hand, Reader, do not thou take with the left. Anon I leave this Nation, and this world: theſe are my laſt words, to a People which I love as mine own ſoul; if in love they may be received, GOD will appear again in* Shiloh.

Thine in the hard travels,
of theſe latter times,

NICHOLAS LOCKYER.

From my quarters in
Edinburgh, April 20. 1652.

To all those of SCOTLAND

That can read with a seeing eye, grace, mercy, and peace.

WHat is now held out in the forepart of this Piece (which occasioned the second) was first offered by the Author, in the very love and faithfulness of his spirit, in a Lecture at Edinburgh. *It was then frowardly entertained by some, roughly by many, and yet earnestly desired to the Press by others. At that time with him, the frame of the former hindered the desire of the latter; yet so as he rested in an expectation of a season, wherein the former also would be likely to hear such*

words, which to some are never sweet
Psal. 141. *till a day of calamity, or*
when their Judges are
overthrown. Thus doth the Lord oft
times sweeten his truth and sayings,
With the bitterness of his doings, and
takes out one heat by another. Jonah
is peevish and hot, and in his heat
cannot receive the expostulation of
God himself, (and such hath bin the
case here) but afterward the suns
heat, and the East-wind (both which
are Scripture Hieroglyphicks of af-
fliction) do beat something into Jo-
nahs *head, and (having*
Jonah 4. *Gods own comment) do si-*
lence the passion of the Prophet.

Possibly Scotlands *vision may come*
as Ezekiels, *out of the whirl-*
Ezek. 1. *winde and the fire. God,*
afore this testimony was given, had
spoken in his wrath to Scotland, *at*
Preston *against the grosser, at* Dun-
bar *against the finer, and at* Hamilton
against

against the finest oposites of this truth and its interest; and since this testimony given, he hath gone on to speak the same language from Enerkethen *to* Worcester. *It may be, some of you the beloved Saints of* Scotland, *(for we cannot but think and call some so, howsoever it hath been taken) may suspect or be willing to search the wretchednesse, poverty, blindnesse and nakednes of your national Church state, and having your ear opened to Gods discipline in the rod, will not in love of your own, stop the*

Psal. 58. *ear to this faithfull Charmer, or soft and sweet wisperer, as the Hebrew signifies. He is wisely charming you from the corruption, not use of Ordinances. If a loose spirit, despising those precious things of Heaven, should seize upon you (which God forbid) we should judge it to have more of the venomous adder in it, and more to be resisted and detested,*

then any thing in your present state. If this good man be not a sweet favour to you all, yet we believe, he will be so to Christ, whom his soul loves, and in whom also you are the desire of his soul. The first part of his Work may put you upon enquiry, whether you have dealt kindly with Christ, to obtrude as imperious and selfish Guardians or Tutors, such a spouse upon him, as is not according to his choyce, minde or liking. The experience of the true and deserving shepherds here (who are as dear to their other brethren, as sheep to the wolves) doth tell them, that almost nine parts of ten in their flock are not sheep, not fit (say they) of civill, much lesse (say we) of Spirituall privileges; and then they are rather a herd or droue, then a flock, for few (as the shepherds themselves think now their driving power ceaseth) will be willing to be kept by them,

nay

nay many (as they already know) do turn again, and would gladly rend them. The keeping of such for their flock, may be as unsafe to the good Ministers as it is unprofitable to the people (both good and bad) and dishonourable to Christ.

Wherefore, it will not onely be a right done to Christ, but also mercy to themselves and the people, to hearken to the voyce of this testimony in the first part thereof; and that will better dispose to the reception of the second, as a necessary preservative of the first, and give a blessed tendency to better correspondence with God and men. But while (not the godly, but) the bulk of the Nation is the Church, it must have Officers and subordinations accordingly, and then no less can be expected, then that the generality of the Officers & members, be an abomination to the Lord and his people, in point of Gospel-communion. Nor is it

any

any wonder, that those few Saints that are lost and drowned among the rest of the Ministers and people, be an abomination to the greatest part of such a Church. If such Saints will not, but in company of this multitude walk with God, or his people, what Gospel-communion can there be expected? As for the purging of this body, we suspect it to be (as the body) supposed, and a diversion from a real duty: For, beside what we apprehend, how impossible it is, that the far lesser number (retaining their present constitution) should regularly cast out the greater part therefrom; we are informed by our experience, that the worser and greater part, is more able and willing to a formall ejection of the better, then on the contrary: And therefore this ten years talk
Pro. 14. of the lips (about purging) hath tended only to penury, and the last years have been further from

that

that work then the former.

But we may now hope, some more reall truth and course will take place.

Act. 12. *God hath found* Scotland, *as* Peter *in a prison, and asleep, between two armed Keepers, the Kirk, (so called) and the State, and bound with two chaines. May there not a light have now shone in the Prison, and the Angel of the Lord with a wakening stroke have smitten her on the side, and bid her rise quickly? And may not her chains, at that voyce fall off, and she gird her loins, and get her out of her bondage?* Scotland's *sicknes discovered it self, and for twelve years*

Mark 5. *her issue, or fountain of blood hath been opened, and she hath suffered many things of many Physicians, and spent all that she had, and is nothing bettered, but rather the worse; her touching other garments and garbs, hath not healed her. Oh that now she would try in faith, what a touch*

touch of Christ will do! It may be, the fountain of blood would be dryed up, and she might feel in her self, that her plague was healed. For which, and all our mercies to this people, shall, with the endeavours be joyned the requests of

Yours in the love and
work of the Gospe

Dalkeith, April 22. 1652.

JOSEPH CARYLL.
JOHN OXENBRIDGE.
CUTHBERT SIDENHAM.

THE ORDER Of the GOSPEL.

In some more main parts thereof, briefly and plainly handled, (as such a Subject will permit.)

ACT. 15. 3.

And being brought on their way by the Church, they passed through Phenice *and* Samaria, *declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.*

THE Church of *Antioch* had great stirs in it, by men of unsound mindes, who therefore desired aid from the Church at *Jerusalem*: What persons they deputed for Messengers, you may see in the verse before my Text, to wit, *Paul* and *Barnabas*, and *certain*

others, &c. v. 2. The Church brought these their Messengers on their way, to testifie their great affection and thankfulnesse, for so brotherly a work. The way they went, my Text tells you, to wit, thorow *Phenicia* and *Samaria*, which were people neer of lin to the *Jewes*, and among which, many were turned to the Faith of Christ, and walking together in the Order of the Gospel, as was signified by Christ himself, *Act.* 1. 8. and is mentioned as fulfilled, *Act.* 9. 31. and in the close of my Text; who *joy to hear like things among the Gentiles.*

The principall things in this verse are these, *viz.* a Church of the New Testament, described by its proper matter, and by a proper effect and operation which this hath, upon such who are indeed turned to the Lord, and able to discern spirituall beauty and glory, it causeth great joy to all such. *And being brought on by the Church.*] What the matter of this

Church

Church is, read the next words, and they will tell you : ---*they declared the conversion of the Gentiles.* What conversion was this ? A meer outside conversion ? Surely if the Brethren had apprehended no more in them, they would have had litle matter for a *great joy* : but of this more will be said by and by.

Let's take terms as they lye, and see how other Scriptures do explain them, and make Scripture its own interpretation, which will be most safe for all persons to go by. The complexion of a visible Church under the Gospel, is here said to be *conversion* : the constituting matter ; *converted ones.* What these converted ones were, according to what Christian can discern of Christian, is the thing to be enquired into. *Paul & Barnabas*, who were Master-builders, and surely very seeing men, that they might not make a meer report, took of these converted ones with them---were *brought*

on in their way by the Church. We tell you, (as if they had said) of such glad tidings touching the Gentiles; but what they are, see your selves, here they are, discourse with them, see if they have not the same Soul-complexion with your selves, whether they have not received the same Spirit of adoption, owning and experiencing the same grace of God which you do. That there was an effectuall work wrought in the hearts of these my Text speaks of, I judge will sufficiently appear, by comparing with my Text, these Scriptures, *Act.* 11. 20, 21. 22, 23. —which *when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus: and the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number of them believed, and turned to the Lord. The tidings of these things came to the ears of the Church which was at Jerusalem, and they sent forth* Barnabas, *that he should go to Antioch, who when he came*

came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a good man, and full of the holy Ghost. The next verse tells us, that he found out *Saul*, and brought him to this Church of *Antioch*, where they abode a whole year: and these Converts first called Christians. *Barnabas* is here said to be a man full of the Holy Ghost, and therefore able to taste his Communion, what divine reciprocation was made amongst them, and heart answering to heart; and he and *Paul* together in a whole years time, might be competently able to give a judgment what they found amongst these first Christians; and I think 'tis very dangerous to say, that as far as they could apprehend, these first Christians had not both name and thing, for which commended, and in which by these worthies joyed in: In particular Churches, some competent

judgement may be made of every particular Member, by able men, in a long tract of time; and so are these Worthies elsewhere said, with this Church, to have had intimate Communion, *Act.* 14. 27, 28. *And from thence sailed to* Antioch, *from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God, for the work which they fulfilled. And when they were come, and had gathered the Church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. And there they* [*abode a long time*] *with the disciples.* Add to this *Act.* 15. where you shall see further, what is solemnly asserted of these Converts in several verses, as *v.* 8. *And God which knoweth the hearts beareth them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us, and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by Faith.* Here is a Text to some purpose,

poſe, *God which knoweth the hearts beareth them witnes*, &c. That they had like powerfull, ſpirituall purifying receptions, with the beſt of them at Jeruſalem: and indeed I think it dangerous for any to affirm, that all theſe expreſſions might not mean effectuall grace, or elſe be ſpoken of ſome onely, but not of the whole. Compare with this, v. 11. 16, 17, 18, 19. what he concludes, *Wherefore my ſentence is, that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles, are turned to God.*

Having thus painfully and plainly laid the foundation by the Word, and by a ſimple and ſincere judgement thereupon, without the leaſt reſpect to any party, or ſelf-intereſt in the world, as he knowes to whom in this as in all my wayes, I deſire humbly to refer my ſelf. I build thereupon this doctrine, *That the proper and allowed matter of a viſible Church now in the dayes of the Goſpel, is perſons truly*

converted, such as God, who knoweth the hearts of all men, can bear witnes of, as indeed sealed for his, by his Holy Spirit. I say, this is the matter we ought now to take, to raise again the Tabernacle of *David*, and none other, not one other, no not in a whole Church, so far as men truly converted, and very spirituall, are able to discern and judge. The particular Text I would cite for the further confirmation of this (that you may see how richly the Scripture consents to this) are these, *Act.* 9. v. 26, *And when* Saul *was come to* Jerusalem, *he assayed to joyn himself to the Disciples, but they were* [*all*] *afraid of him* (by which it seems, they were a homogeniall body, under the same light and conscience, and tenderesse in this matter) and believed not that he was a Disciple. What did they fear? That he did not make profession of Christianity? Why, now he tendered himself to do it, why should they have denied

him

him now, if bare profession had been enough? But it is evident, that they feared that he did but meerly professe, and that they should take in a hetero-geniall piece, one that had but the outside of that qualification which this new building should have; and therefore *Barnabas* took him, and brought him to the Apostles, and declared to them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and how he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at *Damascus*, and ventured his life in the practice of his Profession, used all means to satisfie them of the reality of Gods work upon his heart, and upon this received as fit matter for this new house, and as suitable matter to that which was already in the building. Adde to this, *Act.* 2. 47. *the Lord added to the Church τὺς σωζομένους, the saved, eos qui salvi fiebant*, those which were out of harms way, as we say, in a safe and sure state & so are no persons, but such who have

received of the ſure mercies of *David*: a ſinner is not ſafe, not out of gun-ſhot, till indeed in Chriſt, and this the matter accepted and taken in to build withall, and none elſe, ſo far as they could make judgement between things that differed, and either they were thus ſtrict upon their own will, and ſo not to be followed, or elſe by divine and infallible warrant, and ſo as preſidents, which hath the force of a precept, and this, in, over and above, a plain demonſtration of the poſſibility of the precept to be obeyed and followed, which take off that objection; 'twere well S. if 'twere ſo; but how can it be? how ſhall we do it? why 'tis hath been done, therefore may be, therefore ſhould be, & no other wiſe: ſo this adde *Heb.* 3.5,6. *And Moſes verily was faithfull in all his houſe, as a ſervant, for a teſtimony of thoſe things which were to be ſpoken after; but Chriſt as a ſon over his own houſe, whoſe houſe are we, if we hold faſt the confidence*

dence and the rejoycing of hope firm to the end. To a Church of the *Jewes* is this ſpoker, who did apoſtatize much, and ſo ſook their Aſſemblings, and ſo their exhorting one another, with all thoſe means of grace and life, which God hath inſtituted in his new houſe, and ſo indeed grew worſe and worſe, till at length they came as the reſt of the *Jewiſh* Churches, to nothing. As long, ſaith the Apoſtle, as you hold faſt the practice and power of what you profeſs, ſo long you are a Church; but when you let go this, you un-Church your ſelves, and ſhould be purſued upon you, you ſhould be thrown out, as ſuch un-allowed matter; but if others which ſhould do it, will not, why the Maſter himſelf who is faithfull in all his houſe, he will do it himſelf, he will caſt ſuch a Church wholly off, which thus ſuffer his inſtitution to be corrupted, & ſo indeed did he write *Loami* upon the firſt Churches, quickly after the Apoſtles time, for this thing.

Hints

Hints and ſhadows of this truth, take in theſe Scriptures *Mat.* 16. 17, 18, 19. *Bleſſed art thou Simon Barjona, for fleſh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven. And I ſay alſo unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it, and I will give unto thee the Keyes of the Kingdom of heaven, and whatſoever thou ſhalt binde on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven, whatſoever thou ſhalt looſe on earth ſhall be looſed in heaven.* Note in theſe verſes, theſe things, Firſt, that CHRIST doth not ſpeak heer of the inviſible Church, for he ſpeaks of the power of the *Keyes*, *binding* and *looſing* on *earth*; the inviſible Church is the greateſt part in heaven, and they which are in earth conſidered as one with them, as one intire univerſal body, whereof CHRIST is the Head,

are

are not capable of visible and limited Discipline: Therefore I judge, we are to gather from CHRISTS words, that he speaks by way of anticipation, of that visible order, which he did purpose to institute after his departure, by his Apostles, whereof *Peter* was one. And then secondly observe, of what matter he saith this building should be, to wit, of such as have a Faith, which *flesh and blood cannot reveal*, and to a body thus constituted, is the power of the Keys given, and both these represented and personated to us in *Peter*. I do not finde the Learned and Orthodox of latter times, to apply this place to the invisible Church, and I think I am not then a forcer of this Scripture, in the sense I give of it. Another shadow or hint of this Truth, see *Revel.* 11. 1, 2. *And there was given me a Reed like unto a Rod, and the Angel stood, saying, Rise and measure the Temple of GOD, and the Altar*

Altar and them that worship therein, but the Court which is without the Temple leave out, or cast out, (saith the Originall) *for it is given unto the Gentiles, and the Holy City shall they tread under foot fourty and two moneths.* By the Temple is meant the visible Church, the state and welfare of which, though most infested of any publick condition, shall not be left and ruined, but be carefully looked unto & raised from its corruptions, intrusions & ruines made by unsound men. *Huncin modum jubet ut Ecclesiam Johannis metiatur significans eam nusquam relictum iri, etiamsi varius modus ab hostibus infestatur Agust. Marloratus.* By Altar is meant *per Synecdochē*, the whole worship of God, as the same author hath it. The next term, to wit,

Altaris nomine Christum quidam intelligunt, de quo Apost. Heb. 13. 10 sed rectius alii cultum divinum intelligunt, quemadmodum in plerisque Scripturæ locis pro toto Dei cultu sumitur. Marlorat.

wit, *worshippers*, that explains it self. The state of worship, and worshippers now under the Gospel is to be measured, kept regulated to an exact rule. What is that? why the word of God. *Postquam edoctus est Johannes quanta sit verbi Domini virtus, munus ei injungitur dispiciendi, judicandi, et discernendi Ecclesiam, quæ est verum Dei Templum juxta doctrinam Pauli dicentis, Templum Dei sanctum est, quod estis vos.* 1 Cor. 3. 17. *Marlorat.* What then is meant by the Court which is without the Temple; men which have onely an outside Religion, and an outside worship and devotion, but destitute of the power of Religion. What is meant by the not measuring of these? To this let the same worthy man before mentioned make answer. ---- *Ne metiaris illud. Hoc est, Ne complectaris eos in Spirituali ædificio Domini.* Do not embrace them to be matter in this Spirituall House, they are with-

Et atrium quod foris est Templum, ejice foras

our, and let them be cast out. Why must not such be received into the Church, or why must they not abide in the Church? these make a profession? Why, because the house saith he is Spirituall, Holy, they are not congruous matter. The City of God is a Holy City, as 'tis in the following words of this verse called, ---Why must not these outer Court Christians be taken in, ? Why saith *John, these are given to the Gentiles: Hoc est, ipsi facti sunt conformes Gentibus intrinsecis, imo deteriores sunt illis, quam alibet sanctitatis specie polleant: Nam traditi sunt in reprobum sensum, alienati a cultu Dei*, &c. Such kinde of Professors, and outside christians, will soon in times of temptations conform themselves to the worst of men, Heathens, Turks, yea, and be worse then they, and will strike in with the vilest to to tread down the Holy City, that is

the

the true worshippers in Gods visible Church, such as have indeed name and thing, Form and Power of godlinesse: I cite this Author, not that I finde him fully of my judgement in the matter I am upon, but to see how he and other good men of the reformed Churches, speak unawares the Thing we hold, and cannot indeed tell how else to give any life to places of Scripture, which they undertake to expound; neither indeed can a man tell how to make themselves agree with themselves in their Cōmentaries, without taking them with a grain of Salt in this manner. Upon the whole, this I collect, that persons meerly professing the things of God, are not approved and allowed matter by the Lord in a visible Church, they are such as he doth not measure, embrace for his Building, they are such as are fit to destroy, not to build the holy City, and these Christ not allowing of them, nor measuring of them, but casting

ing them by, and will do if we do not; how then we can, but at our perrill, both in order to God, and in order to such men, embrace them, I know not. Another shadow or hint of this truth, see *Rev.* 4. which whole Chapter is taken up to shew the state of the holy City forementioned. And in the first verse, observe whether *John* is taken to have the frame of this new building given to him. *After this I looked, and behold a door was opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a Trumpet, talking with me, which said, Come up hither and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediatly I was in the spirit, and behold a throne was set in heaven*, &c. *Moses* had his Patern upon the Mount near Heaven, not in Heaven; and yet some very learned Men think, that even that was teaching what that people should be which walked in that first House, Persons really living

ving very near Heaven, with which compare *Ezek.* 44. 7. But *John* hath his Patern given him in Heaven, to ſhadow, that this Temple, Altar, Worſhippers, ſhould all indeed be from above, and ſuch as ſhould have indeed an internall conſecration, and the Law given into the minde, as the Author to the *Hebr.* ſaith, and made *Jews* inwardly, a holy Nation, according to inward choiſe and call, and ſo a Spirituall Prieſthood, *&c.*

But this is not the way which I moſt minde to make Probation by, of this Point. I would prove it by induction. The Church of the *Romans*, the Church of the *Corinthians*, the Church of the *Galathians*, the Church of the *Epheſians*, the Church of the *Philippians*, the Church of the *Colloſſians*, the Church of the *Theſſalonians*, the Church of the *Jews* which are mentioned by *Peter*, and *James*, and the Author to the *Hebrews*, and in the *Acts*, were all thus conſtituted, with Perſons

truly Godly, so fat as a godly man can make judgement of one like himself, *Ergo*. If these be denyed, as Presidents, then I would ask our Brethren of the Presbytery, according to what rule they walk? But if these be confessed as Presidents, then I have onely to shew unto you, that these Churches did all thus constitute, though I think, did not long carefully keep and maintain this pure constitution, for which bore their judgment, and yee do. What the Church of the *Romans* was, read *Paul*, who surely was able to discern in Spirituall matters, and who surely durst not complement with Persons in things of Eternall concernment. *Among whom ye are the called of Iesus Christ, to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be Saints, grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank God for you,* [All] *that your Faith is spoken of throughout the whole world, for God is*

is my witnesse, that I make mention of you alwayes in my Prayers, &c. I cannot think that a Faith of so high esteem with *Paul*, and of such renown through the Christian world, and the matter of such fervent Prayer, should mean onely a temporary faith: Some of these were such as laid down their necks for *Paul*, *Rom.* 16. 4. The rest surely endangered their own necks, every day by their Profession, living in the mouth of that Tyrant *Nero* as *Paul* calls him, or Dragons, as *John* calls all the Heathen Emperours of that place.

If this be accompted but litle, yet many litles put together, amount to much. Adde therefore to this, the Church of the *Corinthians*, *To the Church of God which is at* Corinth, *to them which are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be Saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.*

1. Epist. Corinth. 1. 2.

I thank God in your behalf, that in every thing ye are enriched by him in all utterance, and in all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that ye come behinde in no gift, waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who also shall confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1. Cor. 4. 15. *For though you have ten thousand instructers in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you all.* Persons having such grace in them, as shall be confirmed to the end, as keeps them waiting for the coming of Christ, as are the comfortable seals of a faithfull Minister; that all this should signifie but outward profession, or that these expressions should any way advantage any, to say, that this Church did constitute and congregate together, upon any other accompt, but as there was the true grace of God evident, as far

as

as man could judge, I cannot indeed see. For the rest of the Gentile Churches (that I may not be too large) read your selves these Scriptures, *Gal.*4.9. *Gal.*6.1. *Ephes.*1.1. and 13. *Act.*20. 28.32. *Phil.*1.1,6. *Phil.*4.15, 16. 1. *Thess.*5,6,7. &c.)

For the Churches of the *Jewes*, you have in part heard already, how the first Church, to wit, at *Jerusalem* constituted, and upon what terms they stood with *Paul*: which first Church gave the first Copy to all the Christian World, what to do, and (I think) held their own best, till their scattering by persecution, which God ordered to the encreasing of the Churches of Christ, both amongst *Jewes* and *Gentiles*. But what all the *Jewish* Churches were in this thing for their Members, and how they did build their houses to God, see 1. *Pet.*1.2,3. 1. *Pet.*5.13. with which compare *Gal.*1. 22. *--and was unknown by face to the Churches of Judea which were in Christ.*

And

And whether this was onely in profession? see, 1. *Thess.* 2. 13, 14. *For this cause thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the Word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is indeed the word of God, which effectually also worketh in you which believe. For the brethren became followers of the Church of God, which in Judea are in Christ Jesus; for ye have also suffered like things of your Countrey-men, even as they have of the Jewes, who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own Prophets, and have persecuted us, &c.* The Church of the *Jewes* were such Professors of Christ, as endured persecution, sharp trials for the truth, and were eminently exemplary to the Christian World this way, as indeed Profession then did generally expose unto, though now not, and so voluntary Profession then, signified a great deal more, then that forced Profession of the Gospell, which now we make,

under

under ſuch powers as call for, and countenance theſe things, doth; which ſhould be obſerved and allowed by them, which compare profeſſion then with profeſſion now, if they dealt equally in this controverſie.

If it be objected, that there were wicked perſons in theſe Churches which you have mentioned, therefore we may conſtitute viſible Churches now in the dayes of the Goſpel, with good and bad, with truly good and ſeemingly good, ſuch as make only a profeſſion, though we cannot diſcern the power of Religion in them.

Sol. To this I anſwer, *à facto ad jus non valet argumentum*, becauſe ſuch things are, therefore they ought to be, will not hold. Becauſe bad men were in the Churches, the generall State of which in ſuch a time of the World *John* ſpeaks, *Rev.* 11. 1. 2. therefore they ſhould be there, will not follow, for then why is *John* bid to caſt out that which is without,

and not measure it, not embrace it: What is allowed to abide, is rather the Index, shewing what is the proper and allowed matter, the true constitution and complexion of Church State, now in the dayes of the Gospel. Churches may be negligent, and not so strict to their rule, to examine and prove the grace of God in such as offer to joyn themselves unto them, as the Church of *Jerusalem* did: If Churches do not minde diligently their rule, to look well who they adde to them, and how congruous in weight to the ballance of the Sanctuary, they may have evill persons amongst them enough, and yet not be able to maintain that it should be so. T'is like that the *Asian* Churches, and most of the first Churches, quickly after the Apostles time, grew faulty in this kinde, opened the door wider then they had warrant for, by which corrupted themselves, and for which God turned them

them all out of his house, as defiling of it. Or Churches, though very diligent and duly strict in this matter, yet are not infallible, and therefore hypocrites may deceive a Church for a time, and so get in where they have no right to be; The Apostle *Jude* doth confess so much, verse 4. of his Epistle: *For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, &c.* Not only persons may thus creep into the Church, but also creep into office, and still escape the first judgement upon them, made by the Churches, of which they are. The Apostle doth intimate this to *Tim. Lay hands suddenly on no man*, and observe his charge, which may make a man tremble to read. *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect Angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another, be not partaker of other mens sins, keep thy*

ſelf pure; for ſome mens ſins are open before hand, going before to judgement, and ſome they follow after. 1. *Tim.* 5. 21, 22. We are as appears by this, compared with other Scriptures, to uſe all care, as much as in us lies, to prevent by the firſt judgement of the Church, all that are not godly, from coming into a State, to which they are not approved by God, but if men by their ſubtilty creep in, as the ſerpent into the garden, where they ſhould not be: we are to caſt that out which is without, whileſt within by the after judgement of the Church, which is excommunication, when it doth evidently appear that men are hypocrites, though not drunkards, and ſuch kind of bodily ſinners, as I may ſay, which is far leſs, ſimply conſidered, then hypocriſie; which after judgement, is an ordinance to cleanſe the houſe of God and keep it pure, and according to what it ought to be, and doth ſtrongly confirm the

point

point that I am upon, that the matter of a visible Church, now in the dayes of the Gospel, should be reall Saints, the proper and approved complexion of a visible Church is sanctity, saving grace, and not one known to be otherwise, can justifiably enter or abide within Gods Holy hill.

This truth I humbly conceive, hath strong appearance of reason in it, that the matter of a Church, should be men truly turned to God: for, how otherwise can there be uniformity in the Church, the thing so much desired and admired? Christ is the Rock and Foundation Stone of the Building, this confessed of all sides; the rest of the Building then must be & bear upon him, as a superstruction, ἐποικοδομούμενοι, as *superstructed*, as the Apostle useth the word, *Ephes.* 2. 20. And how they can hold and bear upon him, who have not the faith of him, that faith which flesh and bloud cannot reveal, as is spoken of *Peter*? I know not.

And then how can that house stand which hath such materials? which do not make οἰκοδομὴ συναρμολογουμένη, *coagmentatio congrua*, a fit and congruous encrease and building, as the same Apostle speaks: How can that building stand, whose materials have not a symmetry, but antilogie and antistasie, not an agreement, but a fighting with the foundation, and one another? Christ doth argue from this *medium*, that suitable to the foundation should be the building; or otherwise, such incongruous superstructions will be fired, and they which make them. --- *As a wise builder* (saith he) *I have laid the foundation, and another builds thereon: but let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay, then that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble: every mans work shall be*

made

made manifeſt, for the day ſhall declare it, becauſe it ſhall be revealed by fire, &c. In which words, the Apoſtle argues as I do, that if Chriſt be laid as the Foundation ſtone in a building, 'tis good for men to take heed, that they make congruous ſuperſtructions, leſt all the building fall about their ears: And ſee how he applyes this, v. 16. 17. *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the ſpirit of God dwelleth in you. If any man defile the temple of God, him ſhal God deſtroy, for the tempie of God is holy, which temple ye are.* Incongruous ſuperſtructions, if it be in point of doctrine, it makes incongruous matter, it defiles the temple of God, deſtroyes the temple of God, ſaith the margent, citing the originall, and ſuch will God deſtroy. *For the temple of God (* ſaith he*) is holy, which temple ye are, (*i.*)* ſuch are the temple of God which are holy, which have the Spirit of God dwelling in their hearts, and none

elſe. According to this *medium* is Chriſt called *the Head*, and *the Church the body*, which means homogenialneſſe; otherwiſe, how can there be mutuall derivation from one to another, and groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord, as the Apoſtle addes, *Epheſ.*2.22.

2. The matter of a viſible Church ſhould be reall Saints, how elſe ſhould it be the Church of the living God, the pillar and ſtay of truth, according to that of the Apoſtle to *Tim.* 1. *Tim.* 3.15.--*Church of the living God* (*i.*) ſuch as in which God lives, and ſuch as will bear up truth to all the world, as a pillar bears out any thing hung upon it, to all lookers on. Alas! Chriſtians, which are only ſo outwardly, God doth not live in theſe, neither can, nor will theſe be any ſtay to truth, and the things of God in the world, who have already denied and deſtroyed the power of theſe in their own hearts. Will he hold out truth firmly

and

and faithfully to the world, in the midst of all tryals, which daily denies it in his own heart? This expression, living God, is opened, 2. *Cor.* 6. 16. *For ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, &c.* Church of the living God, and temple of the living God, are one, and the interpretation is one, and here given, *ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them.* So that the Church of the living God, is such as in whom God lives, dwells, walks. Doth God live and dwell in dead persons, in such who onely make a profession of Religion? Will such persons be to truth στερεωμα, *firmamentum*, as the Apostle before speaks, as the firmament is to the stars, who fall from Heaven

themselves? and so, how can God *have glory in the Church throughout all ages*, Eph. 1. 21.

3. The matter of a visible Church should be persons truly Godly, how else can there be offered up in Gods House now, a *pure offering*? For unto the impure and unbelieving, all is so, and then how can the Churches of the Gentiles fulfill that Prophesie, *Mal.* 1. 11. *For from the rising of the Sun, unto the going down of the same, my Name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my Name, and a pure offering, for my Name shall be great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts. ---incense and a pure offering in every place, &c.* Why, every mans offering is as he is, let his offering be what it will. Let a man make up his offring of never so much worth and cost, yet still tis in the accompt of God as the man is: If the man be impure, so is his offering. With this

compare

compare 1. *Pet.* 2. 5. *Ye alſo as lively ſtones, are built up a ſpirituall houſe, an holy Prieſthood, to offer up ſpirituall ſacrifice, acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt*. Wherefore it is contained in the Scriptures, that I lay a ſuitable foundation to ſuch a ſuperſtruction, meaning Chriſt. The ſtones muſt be living, to make a ſpirituall houſe, how elſe can the ſociety be a holy Prieſthood, to offer up ſpirituall ſacrifice, holy and acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt. This place doth confirm, that the foundation and ſuperſtruction is one, and that the Offering and the Offerer are one. To make the Offering ſpirituall, holy, acceptable to God, the perſon that doth offer muſt be thus. Now we know perſons which only profeſs Religion, theſe are dead ſtones, nothing of ſpirituality in them, but meer formality, and ſo hypocriticall, and ſo amongſt the number of them which are moſt abominable.

The matter of a viſible Church ſhould

ſhould be ſuch as are truly godly, how elſe ſhall the *Jews be* provoked, and this particular houſe be ſwallowed up in that generall, and be made a Pillar in that *to go no more out*. Its ſaid, that God will provoke his Ancient People by us *Gentiles*: and how will God provoke them? By the glory and Purity of his Worſhip, and Worſhippers. See for this, *Iſa.* 66. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. In the foregoing verſes, the Prophet tels us of ſore bloud-ſhed: and this to caſt out filth and rubbiſh out of the Chriſtian World. *The Lord will come with fire, and with his Chariots like a whirle-wind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire, for by fire and by his ſword ſhall the Lord plead with all fleſh, and the ſlain of the Lord ſhall be many, they which ſanctifie themſelves, and purify themſelves in the gardens, behinde one tree in the midſt, eating ſwines fleſh, and the abomination, and the mouſe ſhall*

be

be consumed together, saith the Lord: For I know their works and their thoughts: After this rubbish is removed, what then? why, *It shal come that I will gather all Nations and tongues, and they shall come and see my glory, and I will set a signe among them*; (*i.*) make protection for these: and what then? *I will send those which shall thus be defended, and escape, unto the Nations*, where the *Iews* are scattered, to *Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, to Tubal, Javan, which have not heard of my fame, neither have seen my glory, and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles*; and these refined Gentiles thus scattered up and down declaring Gods glory, shall they onely gain by this glory the Gentile World, where they come? No: They shall also bring *all your Brethren* (saith the Prophet) *for an offering to the Lord, out of all Nations, upon Horses and in Chariots*, &c. *Whither shall they bring them? Why*

to

to my holy mountain of Jerusalem, saith the Lord. *For as the New Heavens, and the New Earth, which I shall make shall remain before me*; By which observe, that this *New Heaven* of the Gospel Churches is to remain, to be pure and to remain, as pure things last. And observe further, so shall the *Jews* which these pure Heavens shall provoke, ------ *So shal your seed, and your name remain*: And both joyned together into one pure Church: For that read verse 23. *And it shall come to passe, that from one new Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me*, saith the Lord, *and they shall go forth and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me, for their Worme shall not die, neither shal their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring to all flesh*: Which last words, ah let men read, and with much dread lay to heart, which make

light

light of these things we are upon: Mens Carcases will fall as formerly *Israels* did, for their froward walking, and the pure Church and people of God shall go forth and look upon these corrupted, and rotten Carcases, and give the Lord the glory of his Justice. Impurity of Worship, and Worshippers, provokes God, not the Jews: Tis that which stumbles them at this day, as I have heard from some of their own. God will hold up an exact glory to them, therefore is he exactly punishing the Christian world, to cast out every thing that offends: We have our private quarrels in our expeditions into Nations; Tis because they will not let us alone, saith one Nation to another, and the like; but God hath under all this, a design and quarrell by himself, which we are few of us aware of, and that is by the Sword, to cast out that which is without, to throw filthy things to their place, that he may have a pure people,

people, an an exact glory to provoke his ancient People, which when brought in, ſuch Churches as are thus pure, ſuch New Heavens ſhall be joyned to this new Heaven, and remain with this, as a Pillar in this great Houſe, to go no more out, as is ſaid of *Philadelphia* that pure Church; other Churches ſhall be deſtroyed by the hour of temptation, which there is ſpoken of. *Becauſe thou haſt kept the word of my patience, I will alſo keep thee from the hour of temptation which ſhall come upon all the world, to try them which dwel upon the earth: Behold I come ſuddenly, Rev.* 3. 10. Now when this hour of temptation ſhall be, ſee *Dan.* 12. 1. to wit, immediatly preceding the call of the Jews. *And at that time ſhal Michael ſtand up, the great Prince which ſtandeth for the children of thy people, and there ſhal be a time of trouble, ſuch as never was ſince there was a Nation, even to that ſame*

ſame time, [*and at that time*] *thy people ſhal be delivered, every one that ſhal be found written in the Book: And at that time ſhal be the the deliverance*, &c. By which words it doth plainly appear, that this hour of temptation will be immediatly before the calling of the *Jews*, in which will be cut off all but the *Philadelphian* Church, (*i.*) Typically, all but thoſe who are pure, and ſo inſtrumentall to provoke and bring in that beloved People. Now we know that the *Jewiſh* Church when they ſhall come in again, when New *Jeruſalem* ſhall come down out of Heaven, they ſhall be all holy, every gate, and not onely the gates, but the ſtreets of Pearl, and pure Gold, and hence the meaſuring Reed ſaid to be pure Gold. *For the fearfull, and the unbelieving, and the abominable, and murtherers, and all lyars, all that ſay they are* Jews *and are not*, all ſhall be kept out of this houſe;

Now

people, an an exact glory to provoke his ancient People, which when brought in, such Churches as are thus pure, such New Heavens shall be joyned to this new Heaven, and remain with this, as a Pillar in this great House, to go no more out, as is said of *Philadelphia* that pure Church; other Churches shall be destroyed by the hour of temptation, which there is spoken of. *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them which dwel upon the earth: Behold I come suddenly, Rev.* 3. 10. Now when this hour of temptation shall be, see *Dan.* 12. 1. to wit, immediatly preceding the call of the Jews. *And at that time shal Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people, and there shal be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a Nation, even to that same*

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Now

Now as this houſe then ſhall be, ſo ſhall they be of the Gentiles, which ſhall be joyned in with them, this is evident by *Iſa.* 11. 6. 7. *The Wolfe ſhal dwel with the Lamb, the Leopard and the Kid, the Lion and the Calfe,* all Jews and Gentiles, that ſhall be formed into this Houſe, ſhall be all one; and the Lord ſhal be King over all the Earth: *in that day ſhal there be one Lord, and his Name one,* one people, one faith, one love, one converſation, all in heaven: This Church wil not be a ſpecled bird as they were for which caſt off; No, although we Gentiles then joyned to them; conſequently, the allowed matter of a viſible Church, now in the dayes of the Goſpel, is Perſons truly holy.

Uſe. Take heed then of ſetting againſt a Church of ſuch a complexion, and conſtitution. Wilt thou oppoſe a thing, becauſe it is as it ought to be, this is a meer ſpirit of contradiction, which borders upon malice and blaſphemy.

phemy. The Learned *Jewes* seeing a great aptneſſe in many of their country men, to receive the Doctrine of Chriſt, and the Apoſtles, and they not able to diſprove the things which were taught, yet would contradict, being filled with envy, *Act.* 13. 44. A ſpirit of pure contradiction (I fear) now hauuts many men, and not a Spirit of Superior light, and this temper ſhews men to be poiſon'd with *Sanls* ſpirit, and levend with envy and malice, and out of the heat of this ſtrange fire, do little elſe but blaſpheme the Tabernacle of God, and thoſe which dwell in Heaven, which is no other but a ſpirit of Antichriſt, where ever it is, as you may ſee *Rev.* 13. 6. Hear what the Spirit of God ſpeaks to this generation, Beware leſt that come upon you which is ſpoken in the Prophets, *Behold ye deſpiſers, wonder and periſh, I will work a work in your dayes, which ye will in no wiſe beleeve, though*

though it should be declared unto you, *Act.* 13, 41. If ye cannot wonder and believe the things which God saith and doth, you will wonder and perish: if the Words and works of God brought to your door, can produce no other fruit amongst you but despising, you shall wonder and perish; the stoutest of you all shall do it. Compare with this, *Ezra* 6. 12. *And the God which caused his Name to dwell there, destroy all Kings and people that shall put to their hand to alter, and to destroy this House of God which is at Jerusalem; I Darius have made a decree, let it be done with speed.* If we conceive of *Darius* as a Heathen, (which I can hardly do, weighing circumstances in severall Scriptures spoken of him) then I may say to the Heathen, to all men destitute of God, that one of your own curseth you with a grievous curse; yea, even the greatest amongst you, and the least,

Kings

Kings and *People*. If the Spirit of God come upon one of your own, and make him curse you, and prophesie evill and ruine unto you, from the higheſt to the loweſt, which ſay, *come, lets take the Houſes of God in poſſeſſion*, lets alter and deſtroy Gods worſhip, people, and the like, will ye not believe? That God will do this, to wit, deſtroy Kings as well as People, the greateſt as well as the leaſt, which oppoſe and deſtroy his Houſe and ſpirituall Temple and People, which now he hath: See further, *Rev.* 19.11,12, 13,14,15. *And I ſaw heaven opened, and behold a white horſe, and he that ſate upon him was called faithfull and true, and in righteouſneſſe he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns, and he had a name written which no man knew, but he himſelf. And he was cloathed with a veſture dipt in blood, and his name is called the word of God. And the Armies*

mies which were in Heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linnen, white and clean: And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the winepresse of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, and he hath on his vesture, and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords. And I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cryed with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of Heaven, Come and gather your selves together unto the supper of the great God, that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. With which compare *Psal.* 149. 8.

Ob. Why? but they gather Churches out of Churches, whom you plead for. *Sol.*

Sol. Nay; tis but Churches out of a Church: Gospell Churches out of a Legall Nationall Church; and the one being abolished, there may be, yea, there ought to be a departing from it, and a gathering out of it, into that order which God hath instituted. So we find Churches gathered out of that one Church of the *Jewes*, *Gal.* 1.22. *And was unknown by face unto the* [*Churches*] *of Judea which were in Christ.* And whether he means by being in Christ, meerly according to profession, see 1. *Thess.* 2.14. *For ye became followers of the* [*Churches*] *which in Judea are in Christ, for ye have suffered like things of your countrey men, even as they have of the Jewes, who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us, &c.*

Ob. Those men are full of heresies and dangerous opinions who lean this way. Many Monsters come out of your Independent Churches, therefore

fore surely tis not of God; If it were a state congruous to the Word, surely it would not bring forth so many heresies, divisions, confusions.

Sol. To this I answer first thus: All is not true that is said of Congregationall Churches, and of their friends; it hath been an old wile of the Divell, to calumniate much, and something will stick; nay, by this we are cast out as a reproach unto the prophane, and with them much sticks, as much as is said of us, sticks with them, and a great deal more they can tell how to adde upon all occasions. Nay, I know, all is not true which is Printed of persons loving and honouring Churches, of such a constitution and complexion as I have mentioned. Witnesse Mr. *Edwards Gangren.* Nay, witnesse Mr. *Rutherfurds Spirituall Antichrist*, pag. 250, 251. &c. Where you shall finde the Lord Gen. *Cromwell* charged with publick scandal and unsoundnesse in the Faith, because of

a Letter which he wrote to the Parliament; which Letter I here give the Reader, as taken out of Mr. *Rutherfurds* Book, that all the world may read and judge what unsound doctrine is in it. *Presbyterians, Independents, all have here* (i.) in the Army, *the same spirit of faith and prayer, the same presence and answer; they agree here, and know no names of difference: pity it is it should be other wise any where. All that believe have the reall unity, which is most glorious, because inward and spirituall in the body, and to the Head. For, being united in forms, commonly called uniformity, every Christian will for peace sake study, and do as far as conscience will permit. And from brethren in things of the minde, we look for no compulsion, but that of light and reason; in other things, God hath put the sword in the Parliaments hands, for the terror of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do*

well: If any plead exemption from it, he knowes not the Gospel: If any would wring it out of your hands, or steal it from you, under what pretence soever, I hope they shall do it without effect: that God will maintain it in your hand, and direct you in the use thereof, is the prayer of, &c.

What Heresie is in this Letter, I know not: indeed according to that Logick which *David* speaks of, *Psal.* 56.5. *every day they wrest my words, all their thoughts are against me for evill.* And which *Solomon* mentioneth, —— *Surely the wringing of the nose bringeth forth bloud, &c.* All that Mr. *Rutherfurd* hath inferred, may be collected from the Text: As true, as kinde, and as Christian is his construction of that Letter, as humble, holy and true is that assertion of his, concerning all Independents in *England*, viz. *To my knowledge, there is not this day in* England, *any that is a meer Independent, which maintaineth*

eth nothing but Independencie, with moſt of theſe of New-England, *and does not hold other unſound and corrupt tenets, &c. Rutherfurds Spirituall Antichriſt*, page 251. It makes me tremble to read this expreſſion, when I remember from whom it comes: Surely there be many Independents in *England*, that this good man is a ſtranger to, and how he ſhould then dare to ſpeak ſo of them all as he does, is fearfull, If Chriſtians can allow themſelves this kinde of latitude, to gloſs upon their Brethrens words and perſons, I know not how any man ſhall ſo ſpeak, write, or live, as not to be printed and ſtaged to all the World for an Heretick. When I compare theſe Lines with thoſe in M. *Rutherfurds* Epiſtle to the ſame Book, I tremble indeed, viz. *If I lift up my hand, or bloudy pen againſt the truly Godly, or have a pick at Holineſſe, let mine arm fall from my ſhoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone.*

Secondly, I would answer thus; that there is difference between a cause and an occasion. That we walk in any fundamentall Truth in the power of it, many take occasion from hence to scoff, break forth into much wickedneſſe: What now? Is it not therefore the Truth which we follow, or muſt we leave following it, becauſe many take occaſion from hence, to run out into all evill. As light hath broken out in every age of the World, Satan hath this way (when he could no other way) laboured to darken it, by extracting poiſon out of honey and the honey comb. As in the beginning of its looking out of the bottomleſſe pit of blindnes, when ſome of the firſt Fathers began to lay again that great principle and fundamental of the Trinity, the Divell to darken this, ſet afoot *Arrian* Hereſie, which Hereticks were bloudy enough; but when this would not do, the Divell ſpread their Tenent, that the whole Heavens

were

were darkened (as it were) with these Locusts. After this, when some of the modern Fathers, laid that great fundamentall point of Justification by Faith in Christ, to darken this, the Divel conjured up your Anabaptist in *Germany*, a generation much like your Levellers and Ranters now, which denyed Propriety, Magistracie, all indeed which was good, and by this made great Insurrections and troubles, as History abundantly shewes. Now in this period of time, God hath made another accession of light, respecting the roof and up-part of the House, and now what stirs, dusts, mists, fogs doth the Divell exhale! Why, what now? Is all therefore darknes drosse, because the Divell thus maketh many abuse this season, and the helps and grace which is come unto them? I think things about which the Divell doth make such ado, may rather be thought to have something in them, rather then from hence to con-

clude, they have nothing of God in them; because the Divell doth not usually set against his own, doth not divide against the Divell. When this new Heaven, as the Prophet calls it; when this new Order, respecting Gods House, was first set up at *Jerusalem*, what bloodystirs it made there. When first set up at *Antioch*, what work it made there ---*no small dissention, Act.*15.2. and yet the minde of God.

Ob. But till Independencie, no such sharp and bloudy stirs and dissentions.

Sol. Presbyterians began first to draw the sword, and their bitternesse and basenesse, hath heightned it to that to which otherwise in likelyhood, it could not have come. The two latter Summers wars have been the sharpest, I know they will say, that they have felt, and truly whether their froward spirit did not principally raise these storms, I leave themselves to judge;

they

they converted so many Malignants into Presbyterians, & *e contra*, that if God had not been more gracious, then they ingenuous; they had undone themselves and others too.

Ob. Simon Magus was a man in the Gall of bitternesse, and in the bonds of iniquity, yet upon his Profession of Faith in Christ, he was received into Church fellowship: Therefore meer profession is sufficient to this State, and no more to be lookt after *de jure, nisi ex abundanti.*

Sol. Surely twas not shews but substance which was lookt at, and conceived a deed to be in this man, so far as man can judge (*i.*) of a tree by his fruit, for *de occultis non judicat Ecclesia.* There were surely outward signes of Repentance in this man, and such as the Apostle *Peter*, who received him unto fellowship, was satisfied in, for what *Peter* required at the hands of those, *Act.* 2 38.

Re-

Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the Name of Iesus Christ, for the Remission of sins, &c, He would and did follow the same Rule of Christ, which he had received, and delivered to others, and therefore required as much at *Simons* hands, If he would not dispense with this rule, to one of those great number (*Repent and be baptized every one of you*) surely you have no reason to think that *Peter* durst exact lesse of this man, to be satisfied in him, especially hearing what a creature he had been, and ring-leader in evill.

That *Simon Magus* did deceive the Apostle, just as *Demas* did *Paul*, & give such outward appearance of real inward Grace, that the Apostle thought him to be suteable to the Rule of Church-triall before mentioned, is evident by what is said of him, as also by consent of the Learned, who write of him as of *Judas*, one that carryed himself so craftily, that he seemed a true

true and reall Saint. ---- Tis ſaid, that when he was baptized, he *continued* with *Philip*, προσκαρτερῶν, in the Primitive, προσκαρτερέω, *ſemper adſum*, *perduro aſſiduus ſum*. The word is attributed to the hunting of dogs, ſaith the *Critick*, which will not ceaſe following the game till they have got it, and ſuch a dog no doubt did *Simon* ſeem, one that would have crumbs at leaſt, or elſe he would not, he could not have anſwered the ballance of the Sanctuary, the rule of tryall, which the Apoſtles put to every one. It ſignifies to perſevere with ſtrength, *but we will give our ſelves continually to Prayer* προσκαρτερήσομεν. It ſignifies to attend upon a work undertaken, to ſtand to it, to be inſtant at it. *For they are Gods Miniſters*, [*attending continually*] *upon this very thing*, *Rom.* 13. 6. Thus no doubt was *Simon*, very diligent and full of care, and circumſpection, to carry it ſo in all

things, that he might carry it with all beholders, equally to the Apostles themselves, that he might still be as high in every ones opinion, even in the opinion of the Apostles themselves, as he was in the opinion of the blinde and deluded multitude.

To this agreeth the opinion of the Learned. *Simon himself believed*, &c. ἐπίστευσε (*i.*) *Professus est Fidem*, &c. *Meton. Subjecti. Joan Piscat.* Being convinced by evidence of Gods Power, made outward profession of his Faith, and Conversion. English Annotations. ---- *Et adhærebat ipsi Philipo & baptizatus perdurabat apud Philippum; & conspiciens signa & virtutes magnas edi, obstupefiebat: impii quoque, & reprobi interdum coguntur bonum Dei donum gustare, sed & mox evomant. Jun. Tremel.* Another writes of him thus: *Vehementer stupefactus admirabatur*, &c. *Persimiles sunt Simoni Mago qui simulant se credere nunc Evangelio,*

non

non aliam ob causam quam ut multitudine placeant, & famam & gloriam suam non amittant; autinde quoque lucrum quæstum adaugeant, ex Ecclesiasticis divitiis. Chuon. Pel. Minist. Ecclesiæ Tigurinæ. Vel beati Philippi verbis & virtute victus, veraciter Domino credidit: vel ut magis credibile est, credere se quoadusque Baptisma susciperet simulavit; ut quoniam laudis erat avidissimus, ita ut Christum se credi vellet, sicut Historia narrant, artes ab eo quibus miracula faceret, edisceret, Bed. in Biblium. Sac. vulgat. edit. All these Testimonies I adde, for the Learneds sake, that they may see, and know, that *Simon* so carried the matter, that he seemed another guesse man, then a meer Professor, or otherwise the Apostles had not received him: and when that his hypocrisie did appear, the Apostle rejected him as one not in Christ, and as one who had no share in reall

grace

grace, and upon that ground rejected communion with such an hypocrite, and branded him as he was, that all else might know what they had to do, namely, to follow that rule of the Apostle, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. *Having a forme of godlinesse, but denying the power thereof, from such turn away.* which place shewes plainly, that 'twas the power, and not the Profession, and form that was looked at, and is to be looked at in the admission of members into the visible Church.

Ob. The Apostle saith, *that in a great house there are not onely vessels of Gold and of Silver, but also of wood, and of earth, and some to honnour, and some to dishonour.* By house he meaneth the visible Church: therefore the visible Church may consist of good and bad. 2 Tim. 2. 20.

Sol. That there may be bad men in a Church, hath not been denyed in all this discourse. Because such is the

art

art and craft of Hypocrites to delude the judgment of the best men: But he saith not that these *vessels of earth and wood*, are there allowedly, but they are there to dishonour; that is, being *crept in* where they should not be, as *Jude* speaks, they are to be cast out of the Church as dishonourable; as so indeed was *Hymeneas*, and *Philetus*, of whom the Apostle there speaks in the verses foregoing, of whom, and of one *Alexander*, see what he saith, 1 *Tim.* 1. 20. *Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander, whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme, who had put away faith and a good conscience, which shewes*, that when men put away that which they seemed to have, Faith coupled with a good Conscience, they are to be put away to their master, as vessels of dishonour, and appointed to wrath. Moreover by this great house, he first

2 Tim. 2. 17, 18

means

means the Church of the *Ephesians*, for whose sake *Paul* wrote to *Timothy*, being a watch-man there, and what they were according to the judgement of the Apostle which wrote to them, you have heard.

My purpose was to have preached upon other parts of Church-Order, but God denying opportunity, I thought good to make this Appendix, which contains two Assertions.

SECT. I.

ASSERT. I.

THat the Eldership which is within the particular Congregation, is not in most weighty things, to exert power, without the consent and approbation of the Church whereof they

they are. By things moſt weighty, I mean thoſe things which are moſt eſſential to the ſtate of a viſible Church: as admiſſion of Members, ordination of Officers, and excommunication of either.

ASSERT. II.

THat Presbyteries or Elderſhips, which are without the particular Congregation, exerciſing authoritative and coercive power over it, are an invention of man: By Presbyteries or Elderſhips without the Congregation; I mean, ſuch an Elderſhip as is exerc'd and pickt out of ſeverall particular Churches, combinding and aſſuming to themſelves ſuperiour and deciſive power over thoſe particular Churches: Such an Elderſhip, with ſuch a power, is unwarranted by the Word.

SECT.

SECT. II.

THat the Eldership of a particular Congregation, is not in most weighty things, to exert power, without the consent and approbation of the Church whereof they are, I prove by these Arguments:

1. First, Because the power of the Keyes was not at first given to *Peter*, as an Apostle, or as an Elder, but as a Believer: for, upon the Confession of his faith, had he this trust bequeathed to him, *Matt.* 16. 16. Therefore to the Church of Believers, and believing with such a faith as flesh and blood cannot reveal, was the Keyes of power primarily given, and to the Elders in the second place, as exerted out of this first state, and as Officers and Servants of it. To this agreeth that of one of the Learned, *Claves datæ sunt Ecclesiæ, & in actu primo, &* Petro, *ut in actu secundo. Gerson.*

SECT.

SECT. III.

2. SEcondly, because Elders are set over the Church, by the voluntary choise of the Church, whereof they are such Officers, who choose them to be their Ministers in the Lord, and may depose them again, if they prove unworthy of such a Station: therefore have they no absolute power over that Church, to which they are servants, but in the nature of guides, to direct them in the wayes of the Lord, and so long as they go right, to be honoured and followed, but if otherwise, to be admonished, and if impenitent, to be rejected, as they whose sins *follow after to judgement.* Now such judgement could not be exercised upon Elders, if such an exempted power be taken to themselves, without the Church, but might do what they please with the Church in which they are Servants,

and

and the Church not be able, or at least not sufficiently able, to do any thing to them; which is to make them *Lords over Gods heritage. 1. Pet. 5. 3. Petrus Apostolus rationem reddere Ecclesiæ cogitur, nec dedignatus est, Act. 11. 4. noverat enim se non Ecclesiæ Dominum, sed ministrum. Ecclesia Christi Sponsa est, Petrus servus & minister solus. Omnia enim sunt Ecclesiæ, Paulus, Apollo, Cephus, 1. Cor. 3. 22. Paraclesis pag. 157.*

SECT. IV.

3. THirdly, Because otherwise the Elders cannot but offend the litle ones of the Church, yea the tender consciences of stronger brethren, forasmuch as persons may be taken in and cast out, and Officers set up and pulled down; concerning either of which, they can have no distinct knowledge, or at least, no sufficient ability to hinder, because decisive sen-

sentence lyes altogether in the Eldership. Neither is this an offence taken, but given, forasmuch as in these great transactions, the benefit or hurt of every Member, is not onely equally, but greatly and mainly concerned. The transactions of other things, which are meerly prudentiall, or not of generall concernment, or not of so great generall concernment, no doubt do properly and determinately belong to that power which the Church doth institute within themselves, as their eyes and hands, more conveniently, decently, and expeditiously to deal with. Now to give offence to Christs little ones, one of the least of his Family, is not onely forbidden but threatned with very heavy punishment, *Mat.* 18. 6, 10. Which was spoken immediatly to the Apostles, to the twelve, as you may see, if you compare this place with *Mark* 9. 35, 36. *And Jesus called the twelve, and said unto them, If*

any

any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all; and he took a Child and set him in the midst of [*them*] &c. That is the Apostles and Disciples.

SECT. V.

4. FOurthly, because the spirit of discerning, both respecting Persons and things, is not confined as a peculiar to the Presbytery, or Eldership of the Church, as if the whole body were but that one eye, or as if they alone were the head, bearing all the senses in them; But the same gift may be in a great measure in some of the members, and a greater gift when all are joyned together in the Name of Christ, and his Presence with them, to discern and judge. Of a conjunct strength of Saints, what mighty things and glorious are spoken in the Scriptures; that they shall judge the world, much more able to judge their owa affaires, in a far narrower compasse;

passe: that they shall judge Angels, 1 *Cor.* 6. 23. Moreover we know that the Scripture again saith, that variety of gifts are given to the Church, *as Christ will*, & when he wil, at what door, and by what mean hand he wil, for the good of the whole, and light comes in some times from a little crany, and hole, when large windows are close shut up, and not one window leaf opened, all the while businesse of great weighe are in debate; so that the greatest cannot say to the least, *I have no need of thee*. All this help to the good of the whole, would be made void, if the managing of all things be committed wholly to the Presbytery, and the people left out, onely to see and judge implicitely, by their eyes and wills, who thus impropriate power.

SECT.

SECT. VI.

5. FIfthly, because in these weighty things forementioned, of Censures, Ordinations, &c. The Scripture is expresse, that the whole Church should be joyntly Authoritative about them, and not the Presbytery or Eldership of the Church alone. I will instance in each of these: As for censures, the command of Christ, is, that we *tell the Church*, *Mat.* 18. 17. which word I judge doth mean the whole Church, and not the Presbytery or Eldership onely, unlesse I could find the Church thus used in Scripture, for the Presbytery onely. If it should be said, Church here, means the Jewish *Synedrion*, and so by proportion the Eldership of the Gospel Church. To this I answer first, that the *Synedrion* was instituted for civill affairs between man and man, to bear humane burdens, the *burdens of the people*,

people, *Numb.* 11.17. although even these Officers also, had an immediate unction of the spirit, by which they *prophesied*, v. 25. How far the latter gift was of use, and exercised by them, is hard to finde out; but how the other gift was used, to wit, to bear the common burdens of the people, and to be servants to them, as afterwards Judges and Kings were, as the expression is, 1. *King.* 12.7. — *If thou wilt be a servant to this people, &c.* is manifest. And I should think, that this spirit of Prophesie was a gift some way subservient to the particular station and office to which called out, seeing it is said, that it was that Spirit which God took off of *Moses*, and gave it to the 70. which when they had, as *Moses* was a Prophet by way of redundancie, from the spirit of his Place, and spake of Christ; so these, by way of redundancie, yet from the spirit of their Place, as such annointed civill officers, were also Prophets in some

some passages, and spake of Christ, but still the form of their Office abiding civill. Now to make a proportion, from a civill Station, to an Ecclesiastical, is not regular.

Synagogæ sunt conventus Ecclesiastici, Synedria conventus judiciales. Scultet. exercit. Evangel. lib. 2. cap. 11.

SECT. VII.

BUt I see no reason at all from the context, why this should be thought, that the *Jewish* Representive, of one kinde or other should be here meant; their *conventus judicum*, or their *conventus Ecclesiastici*; for, there is nothing foregoing or following, that gives any leaning language, this way: but, much to insinuate and signifie, that he speaks of that Church, which should speedily take place, to wit, the order of the Gospel Church: for he speaks in the verse foregoing of little ones, which he explains to be true Believers, and converted

converted ones, v. 6. and v. 3. And this is made the qualification of the visible members of the New Church, in the Chapter foregoing, *Mat.* 16. 17. Then the very words of censure, in case the Church should be disobeyed, are the same with those he useth to *Peter*, when he gave the Keys to him upon his Fath, ---- *Whatsoever ye binde on earth*, &c. *Mat.* 18. 18. And just thus saith he to *Peter* ch. 16. 19. *And I will give unto thee the Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth*, &c. So that the one explains the other; that by Church, is not meant the Presbytery, or Eldership of one kinde or other, but the Gospel Church, the Congregation of Beleevers; these *conjunctim* have the Power to censure and cast out, according to that 1 *Cor.* 5. 4. *When you are gathered together*, &c. *to deliver such a one to Satan* &c. And by the same joynt power received in again, that as his punish-

ment was by many, so his consolation and reception might be *by many* also; as tis 2. *Cor.*2.16. that Satan might take no advantage; which is enough to shew, how that admission of Members should be a joynt Act of the Church, as well as excommunication of Members.

The contrary to this understanding of these and such like places, serves either to maintain an Episcopal power over the Church, which is all one with the Papall; or else an usurpation like unto it by the Presbytery, in managing all things without the people, which in effect comes all to one, that the people in all publick censures, admissions, are but meer spectators of what is done, which is the very doctrine and exposition of the Jesuits of *Rhemes* upon that place fore-cited: See *Rhem.* Annot. on 1. *Corinth.*5.4. with their marginall Notes; And so by a circular motion, we shall come from the Papall to the Episcopall, and from

from the Episcopall to the Presbyteriall, and from the Presbyteriall to the Papall power again, of depriving the people of God of their best Liberties, in matters so much concerning them, there being little ods under whom they have the same bondage, whether they be brought in bondage by one Prelate, or by many Presbyters; who as they take power to themselves without the Word, may justly have the same title, with other usurpers and Lords over the flock of Christ.

SECT. VIII.

Further instance may yet be given, In the Synod held at *Jerusalem*, where the Apostles themselves were present, & divers Elders with them, the matters being of great consequence, as well for faith as practice; yet nothing was done in the beginning, carrying on, or ending of the same, but with

intereſſing the Congregation and the Brethren, their names being to the Letters, they ſpeaking in the Aſſembly, they having ſatisfaction by argument, and not over-born by authority, and theſe joyning their aſſent, in ſending back choſen Meſſengers from amongſt them, as *Judas* and *Silas*, to other Churches; it were the Apoſtles, Elders, *with the whole Church*, that joyned in it, as appears, *Act.* 15.22,23. If at any time the Church might have been left out, it might have been at ſuch a time as this, when the inſpired Apoſtles were preſent, and in matters of this nature. And albeit the Apoſtles might have determined what ſhould be held or done by their infallible Apoſtolick power, yet would they not leave ſuch an example to future Ages of ſuch a way: that is, either for *Peter* as Primate, to introduce a Pope, or Presbyters as Primates, to introduce a Superintendent, or Superintendents, a Generall coercive Aſſembly, or coercive

cive Kirk-generall Commiſſioners, to ſuperſede all power of the People, and particular Aſſemblies of Saints.

SECT. IX.

2. FUrther inſtance yet may be given, in the choiſe of certain Officers or Deacons to attend Tables, which is made by the Apoſtle an inferior office, and yet the Apoſtles would not proceed to this, by a private power of their own, but required the whole multitude of Believers, to make their own choiſe of ſuch perſons, and ſo qualified: which election they confirmed, and not nulled, or any way altered, *Act.6.3,5.* And this, ſaith *Calvin*, *legitima ratio communibus ſuffragiis eligi, qui publicum aliquod in Eccleſia munus obituri ſunt.*

SECT. X.

3. A Further inſtance yet may be given in ordination of Elders,

which was done συγκαταψηφίζεται, *communibus calculis, simul suffragiis electus est, Act.*1.26. By joynt voice was *Matthias* ordained to his Place, after the Lord had pointed out which of the two should be the Successor of *Judas*. One would have thought, that the Lords pointing out the man, had been enough to formalize the whole matter; and yet lest this might prove a means, to justle out the priviledge of the whole Church, in matters of essentiall concernment; after the Lords designation which was proper to him, they joyntly take this designation, and enstate him amongst them, not by the suffrages of some, but by the suffrages of the whole Church, as appears by the preparing and drawing out of the whole to this particular work by the Apostle *Peter*, who stood up in the midst of the Disciples, the number being about a hundred and twenty, and speaks of this matter jointly to all, and tells them that twas meet,

meet, that some one that was well approved among them, and had gone in & out amongst them, might be chosen by them, and [*they*] appoint two, &c. [*they*] gave forth their lots, and so *they* numbred him, or ordained him which the lot fell upon. And this opens that, *Act.* 14. 23. which also strengthens what we have in hand: *And when they had ordained them Elders in every Church* χειροτονήσαντες, from χεὶρ which signifies a hand, and τείνω *extollo*, to lift up, which sheweth what this ordination in the formality of it, was, that the Apostles in and with every Church of Believers where they came, did make suffrage who should under-go this great Office of Eldership in such Churches,

I am not ignorant that learned and worthy men judge, that here was no ordination, but onely an election, of which the Apostle did approve, but *pace tanti viri*, I am of another opinion, prayer & fasting being joyned, the necessary attendents of ordination.

and so joyntly with each Church, and not by a distinct exempted power above them, was this work done, according to the first patern fore-mentioned in the *Acts*. For, to apply this onely to the Apostles, which in number were but two, *Paul* and *Barnabas*, were improper to the nature of the word which is here used: for two to lift up their hands; suffrage is not a thing to be managed by two, as fencing is not a thing capable to be done by one; suffrage doth suppose many, and these many, to be distinguished which way they incline, or not incline, by some signall, visible to all lookers on. Now by these two first examples, are other Scriptures which speak of Ordination, as if they did attribute it to the Elders onely, to be interpreted, if other answers more proper to such places cannot be found out.

SECT.

SECT. XI.

FInally, I might inſtance in lower matters, which would ſtrengthen the Argument; for if in leſs things the Elderſhip may not act alone, ſurely not in greater. As in Letters recommendatory, they were not directed to the Elderſhip of ſuch a Church, but to the whole Church, of which they were to be received: So *Paul* recommended *Phebe* to the Church of *Corinth*. So *John* wrote to the Church, concerning certain Brethren that were to be received by them, and *Diotrephes* the Elder, which ſtood upon his ſole authority in this and ſuch like things, and uſed the Keyes at his own pleaſure, to keep out, and caſt out as he would, is branded with this mark, *not to be of God*, but of Satan, the father of all evill, for this very thing, and one that had not *indeed ſeen God*, 3. *Ep. Jo.* 11.

SECT. XII.

TAke common testimony to this truth: In the first times this was so well known, and so frequent in practice, to take in the joynt suffrage of the Congregation, in all matters of greatest weight: That Bishop *Whitgift* himself, one that wanted not wit, nor learning, nor any other helps, and setting all his strength to maintain these contrary to what we are upon, yet is constrained to confess, that in the Apostles times, the state of the Church was Democraticall, or Popular; the people or multitude having a hand almost in every thing, *Whitgifts defence* p. 182. Which word *almost*, doth well suit the thing I am upon, and indeed speaks, that he saw much light in this matter, though he could not receive it in love; for indeed, as I have said, in all weighty matters, all the body did bear their joynt voice to the transaction there-

thereof, as hath bin before proved. And what else meaneth that Canon, that was made in the Councel at *Laodicea*, 330. years after Christ, that the people after that, should have no hand in the choise of their Officers, unless formerly it was. So *Caranza Epitome*, page 59. By which common testimony, it appeareth, that when Metropolitans, and Bishops, and Superintendents sprung up, that then the Liberties of the People were by degrees taken from them, one with this device, and tother with that invention, which before they had, which should make the children of these, more willing to repent of, and restore again, then yet, ah alas! words, works, blowes, bloods of body and soul will make them: how low, O Lord, shall we lie, ere we lay to heart whom we have so long robbed and spoiled, and whose dwelling-place we have so great a time polluted and laid waste!

SECT.

SECT. XIII.

Against these grounds, are these Objections following.

Ob. THe Apostle *Paul* makes mention of a Presbytery or Eldership, by the imposition of whose hands, and by no other conjunct or previous thing, *Timothy* was ordained: therefore the Presbyterie wholly without the Church, may exert power authoritative in most weighty things, and order and govern the Church alone: See 1. *Tim.* 4. 14. *Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophesie, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery.*

Sol. The Presbytery here cannot be meant of an ordinary Eldership, which hath its ordination from men, because it is beyond the power of ordinary officers, to give being to extraordinary; now such was *Timothy*,

thy, to wit, an Evangeliſt. And therefore comes not under our Diſpute, but is to be ranked with extraordinary Apoſtolicall Acts, and ordinations, unto extraordinary offices, which are ceaſed. Of which nature ſee, *Acts* 13. 2. 3.

SECT. XIV.

Ob. WE read that *Timothy* and *Titus* did ordain, and are exhorted in an ordinary way to go to work, and by an ordinary ſpirit, to wit, *not to lay hands ſuddenly on any man, nor to be partiall, but* to weigh fit qualifications in every one, *that they were blameleſſe, the husband of one wife, not accuſed of riot, not ſelf-willed, not ſoon angry, not given to filthy lucre*, &c. 1 *Tim.* 5. 22. *Tit.* 1. 5. And this ordination they acted alone, therefore the Eldership of a Church, may do moſt weighty things in the Church without

without the joynt consent of the Church.

Sol. One of these places answer another, and opens another: for it is said to *Titus*, that he should ordain Elders in every City, *as Paul had appointed him*, *Tit.* 1. 5. Now it cannot be thought in reason, that the Apostle would appoint him to ordain, otherwise then he himself did ordain; but he himself ordained by the suffrage of the people, and established them by the help of their fasting and prayer, *Act.* 14. 23. And this is all which is left upon record, for direction in this matter, as yet we can find, and therefore this appointment *Timothy* and *Titus* must and did follow, and then the truth is still abiding, which I have laid down: That Elders cannot in weighty things of the Church, move determinately, without the Church. If extraordinary officers durst not so do, ordinary officers surely have lesse reason so to

adventure

adventure to practise over their people.

SECT. XV.

Ob. IF the Eldership in a particular Congregation cannot determinately act in the Church, without the consent of the Church, then Church government is a Democratie, all are Elders, and Officers, and Pastors, and Teachers, and Rulers alike, and then what need differing names, and stations, when these as to distinct power, signifie nothing?

Sol. The power of the Church may be considered, as essentiall, or Organicall: things of Church essence, I call those weighty particulars forementioned, to take in, and cast out, the reason being alike in both: *Ye judge them which are within, cast out therefore from among you, the incestuous person*, 1 *Cor.* 5. 12. The *incestuous person* was not onely among

among the Elders but the people, and they are bidden to cast him out, as well as the other; to exert office, or degrade from office; this I call an essenciall or fundamentall power, because it is that in which the being of the Church consists, and is a right, not in one individuall, but in many individuals, as united in one Brotherhood, fellowship, or society, as a concret body: and of this fundamentall power I have all along spoken, and this belongs equally to all. But then there is an organicall power, which is, *Potestas officii particularis*, which is that by which every one keeps his place and rank, one as an eye, another as an hand, another as a foot; some as leaders, others as followers, &c. Some to judge, others to declare, act, and exercise that judgement in the name of the rest, because God is the God of Order; and because we know that it is confusion for all to speak at once, Pray at once:

This

This latter, to wit, an organical power, is proper to each officer, and not to the whole. The power of judging of Members to be admitted, is common to the whole Church, Elders and Fraternity; The manner of managing this, and exerting this judgement to the knowledge and desire of him that assayes to joyn himself to the Church, is peculiar to office, so may it be said of the rest: The former is a power lying formally in many conjoyned, and not in any one: The latter is a power derived from many, and lying formally in one, and not in many, and for those particular resultive works forementioned; and so is their power distinctly usefull and significative, and not useleſſe and nothing from the whole.

SECT. XVI.

Ob. BUt is not this confusion, for all to have a hand in these great things? *Sol.*

Sol. No: The Church being considered as an Organicall body, the power of acting may be fundamentally and intrinsecally in the whole, and yet each Organ move orderly in his distinct place, and way: As for instance, In the naturall body of man, the sensitive faculties are all in the soul originally; and the soul it self, is in the whole body fundamentally, *tota in toto, &c.* So that the senses are radically, and potentially in all the soul, and the soul radically and potentially in all the body, and yet these senses act onely by such powers of the body as are fit to act by; as seing by the eye, and hearing by the ear, *&c.* And so the soul acts all its works, by such organs as are proper to each work; the hand to work, and the feet to go.

SECT. XVII.

Ob. THe Elders of the Church are called Overseers, Stewards, Shep-

Shepherds, Fathers, all which in their analogie, hold forth a peculiar and sole power to do things. Fathers govern alone, so Overseers, &c.

Sol. Minuta's in Parables must not be fastned on, but *principalia* what is their main scope, Elders are called *Rulers*, *Heb.* 13. 7. ἡγουμένων, Leaders, guides, as the Note in the Margent shewes; which intends principally, to direct according to such Rules of the word, wherein they should be better skilled then the Congregation generally are, and not absolute power over the flock: To expound this unto absolute power, is to make the Apostle oppose himself, who affirmes of himself and others, that *as Lords they did not use dominion over the faith of any*, 2 *Cor.* 1. 24. *Peter* likewise, 1 *Pet.* 5. 3. *but shewed themselves examples of the flock.*

They are called Overseers, ἐπισκοποι, such as should use diligent inspection, Watchfulnesse, Heed-taking

to

to the Flock, that none go aſtray, none periſh for want of Counſel, Reproof, Conſolation, &c. But doth not intend by theſe termes, Lord Biſhops, or Lording Presbyters, Lordly Over-lookers. *Vi & ſevitia Dominantes in Eccleſia.* Elders are ſo Rulers, and ſo Over-ſeers, and ſo Shepherds, that they are alſo Fathers; and ſo Fathers, as alſo Brethren; and ſo Brethren, as a Brother-hood, linked in bonds of mutuall and equall power fundamentall, together; which no Organical power doth deſtroy, and pluck up; but teach men rather more exemplarily to fulfill; as we ſee in Chriſt, by waſhing his Diſciples feet, although he was the great Biſhop of our Souls, and ſole Ruler indeed, and Law-giver.

SECT. XVIII.

I come now to the ſecond Aſſertion.

That Presbyteries, or Elderſhips, which are without the particular Congre-

Congregations, exercising authoritative, and coercive power over it, are an invention of man. By Presbyteries or Elderships without the Congregation, I mean such an Eldership, as is chosen out of severall particular Congregations, assuming to themselves superior and decisive power over them: Such an Eldership with such a power, is a device of mans wisdom: which I prove by these arguments.

SECT. XIX.

First, because they are without foundation in the Word: Secondly, because they oppose the Word. Thirdly, because it destroyes the end, for which Church-power and jurisdiction is. Fourthly, because the particular Church, is compleat without it, and Christ doth not use to appoint needlesse things, though we oft times do, being dark and diffident creatures:

I will plainly and briefly speak to all these, and shut up this discourse, and commend it to the blessing of God, in the hand of every Reader that it shall come to.

SECT. XX.

First, a coercive Eldership out of each particular Church, is a device of man, because tis without foundation in the Word. That I may clear this, two things are to be done; First, to shew what the nature of these forrain Elderships is; and then, upon what foundations in the Scripture they are built, and try whether righly and ingeniously mortised in such places, and by this twill appear whether forrain and sojourning Elderships have warrant by the Word, or not. For the first, I finde among our brethren themselves, That Elders and Brethren, sent and impowered from their severall Congregations respectively

ctively, to transact and conclude such and such Ecclesiasticall Affairs, within such a limited bound, *ex suâ potestate*, is a forrain Presbytery; higher, and higher then that, and higher then the highest of either the former; this doth not *diversificare speciem*, they have all one common nature, and therefore to make one of them fall, will pull down all the rest.

SECT. XXI.

NOw this being the nature of the thing to be proved; our next work wil be, to enquire the Scriptures this is builded upon, which I finde to be these following, *Act.* 1. 15. 23, &c. The eleven Apostles here meet together, and these as a supreme body over all others, convene the Church at *Jerusalem*, dictate what and how to be done, in that case of losse upon the Church, which shewes that there is a forrain authoritative Eldership over particular Churches.

SECT.

SECT. XXII.

Sol. TO this, ſomthing is to be anſwered in general; that the ſtation of the apoſtles was extraordinary, it being the formality of their Office, to take care of all the Churches, 2. *Cor.* 11. 28. —*that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the Churches.* Being therefore by their Place, Elders in all Churches, might and did interpoſe their powers in ſeverall particular Churches, where they came, and expreſt their judgement by counſell and vote, as occaſion required: and therefore what they did *modo extraordinario*, is not competent to be exemplary: extraordinary practices, are not fit matters to make up ordinary preſidents, as certain, and ſtanding, and indubitable copies for poſterity to write after: we muſt take only what is ordinary, when we would make ordinary paterns to regulate our proceedings by.

SECT

SECT. XXIII.

SEcondly, I would anſwer thus: *Peter* in this matter fore-mentioned, leads the action, opens the cauſe of their coming together, and the mind of God, and how the action ſhould be ordered: the whole Aſſembly by mutuall conſent, preſent two to choiſe, and commend the determination of the buſineſſe to God, by prayer, and ſo caſt lots; and what in all this, that ſhewes ſuch an Elderſhip as is before-mentioned, and as now rules in Presbyteriall Churches? True it is, that the eleven Apoſtles were here together, becauſe they were commanded by Chriſt to abide in *Jeruſalem*, untill they were endowed with the Spirit from above. But there was nothing here done, but any one of them might have done it. And as for the concurring Elders of other Churches, they could not have this, being the firſt and onely Goſpel-

Church extant. Tis true, this whole Church concurred and accepted him upon whom the lot fell: but here was no joynt voices and suffrages of Pastors, and Elders, and chosen Brethren of many Congregations, which is the thing to be proved, to give forrain Eldership footing in this place; that they should be a combination of appropriate Elders to severall particular Churches, which these were not, but generall Officers.

SECT. XXIV.

ANother Scripture cited for the authority of a forrain Eldership is, *Act.* 4.35. *For as many as were possessors of lands, &c. sold them, and brought the price, and laid it down at the Apostles feet, &c.* This the Apostles of themselves disposed, &c.

SECT. XXV.

Ans. HOw this place will maintain a forrain coercive Eldership

Elderſhip, I do not yet underſtand. For the Apoſtles though they had a capacity over many Churches, yet then there were not many when this was done; and this capacity was as they were Apoſtles, not as they were ordinary Elders: and in this matter did an extraordinary thing, becauſe the officers fit for this work, were not yet ordained. But in all this, where are joynt voices and ſuffrages of Officers, Elders and Brethren of diverſe particular Churches, commiſſioned to this work, which makes up this forrain Presbytery we ſpeak of? The like may be ſaid to *Act.*6.3,4,5. about the chooſing of Deacons and their ordination: the Apoſtles as extraordinary perſons laid hands on theſe, but what appears from hence of ſuch an Elderſhip, excerped and commiſſioned from ſeverall Churches, as now Presbyterians aſſert and uſe, is yet to find. This may likewiſe anſwer that *Act.*20.28. who are there ſhewed

not to be Elders of many Churches which *Paul* sent for, but the Elders of the Church, v. 17. to wit, of one Church, of the Church of *Ephesus*, and charging them to attend to the *flock*, not *flocks*, v. 28. Here is no joynt voice of various commissioned Elders, &c.

SECT. XXVI.

TWo places most of weight are, *Acts* 15.28. *It seemed good to the holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden then these necessary things, that ye abstain from meat offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication, from which if ye keep your selves, ye do well.*

SECT. XXVII.

Sol. HEre is an Eldership of several Churches (indeed) met; but as touching the coertion of their power, as such an excerped Eldership enforcing their results upon other

other Churches; this is the other thing to be brought in, to make up the business we dispute against, and therefore this is that we must here enquire into. And that we may be clear and full in answer to this place, this must first be premised; That, though it be true, that the Apostles as such, were extraordinary Officers, yet that in this act and meeting, they did not thus move; my reason is this, because in the power of extraordinary assistance, and under the spirit of infallible help, Officers do not, nor need not, joyn ordinary Churches and Officers (as here was) in their consultations and enquiries: officers and brethren, here disputed, enquired, each man had allowed liberty, to propound his doubts, urged the Scriptures, *Act.* 15.7, 8, to 18. So that what was practised and issued here, was imitable, and left as a Samplar to all succeeding Generations, how to seek out the truth in difficult matters.

SECT. XXVIII.

FRom hence therefore this may be collected, that the ſentence, burden, or decree which was iſſued from this meeting, was not therefore Scripture or Canonicall and binding, becauſe they decreed it, as it ſtill was, when the Apoſtles moved by the proper ſpirit of their Apoſtolicall ſtation, according to that 2 *Pet.* 1.21. *Holy men of God, ſpake as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt.* But what they decreed, was by debate found out, to be expreſſe in the Scripture, or undeniably deducted from thence, and ſo by one of theſe wayes was found to be Scripture, and was therefore decreed and enjoyned by them upon others, as the induſtry of theſe worthies in thoſe decrees, gave their own evidence. And thus do worthy men judge, is that phraſe to be underſtood. *It ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt, and to us, v.* 28. By the Holy

Holy Ghoſt then muſt be either underſtood, the immediate Revelation of the Spirit, parallel to that of 2 *Pet.* 1. 21. and this the Text admits not; for there was no extraordinary Revelation, that can in reaſon be attributed, or conceived to belong to the ordinary multitnde. Or elſe it muſt be the Holy Ghoſt, as ſpeaking in the Word, which latter is moſt manifeſt to be the meaning, becauſe things reſulted by them, follow by infallible inference from the Scriptures as the Will of the Lord, and other by expreſſe Text, as that of fornication. That in indifferent things, whilſt other ſcruple them, we ſhould take heed of offending them; and in that which is expreſly wicked, that under ſuch a notion and bond, we ſhould ſhun them: ſo that what they produced by debate and by this power was materially binding, foraſmuch as what they produced, was for the Matter of it no other, but the Will

of God, but not formally, (*i.*) as the result of such a collegiat coercive Eldership.

SECT. XXIX.

Ob. HAd then this Synod no Authoritative power at all? To what end then is this ordinance?

SECT. XXX.

Sol. AForrain Eldership rightly constituted, hath peculiar Authority, (*i.*) a power of preheminent and prevailing counsell, though not a power of jurisdiction, to constrain their results, to be practised; or to censure Ecclesiastically, in case persons who have the result of things produced by them, do not follow them. They have as an Ordinance of God, a power of preheminent and prevailing counsell: That is, what result in difficult matters this body makes, ought to be preferred and prevail more upon our hearts, then what inter-

interpretation other ſingle perſons, and ordinary helps, ordinarily afford.

SECT. XXXI.

THat this ſojourning Elderſhip, did onely exerciſe a power of counſell, and not a power of juriſdiction, appears by theſe circumſtances. Firſt, theſe decrees are ſaid to binde thoſe to whom they are ſent; And 'tis evident, they were ſent to all the Churches of the Gentiles, *Act.* 21.25. *As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded, that they obſerve no ſuch thing, ſave onely that they keep themſelves from things offered to idols, and from bloud and from ſtrangled, & from fornication.* Now theſe had no commiſſ. nor elſe of that kind delegated to that Synod, and therefore what they did there, could not binde them by way of any authoritative juriſdiction: where then is no delegation of meſſenger, by mutuall conſent, there is no

right of jurisdiction. Now not binding by jurisdiction, it must needs be, that they did bind these Gentiles by way of such preheminent counsel, & as such things which in themselves were clearly held out to be Gods minde and will: that here they did acquiesce, and did not further meddle with any juridicall processe upon them, appears by those pacifick words, which would they were written not with ink and pen, but with the Spirit of the Lord upon all Prerbyters hearts, who are so turbulent in these times --- *From which if you keep your selves, ye shal do well. Fare ye well.*

SECT. XXXII.

2. SEcondly, that this sojourning Eldership did exercise onely a power of Counsell, is evident by this further circumstance of reason; the controversie being onely between the Parties which met in the same counsel; For tis said that they which were for Circumci-

Circumcision so hotly, came down from *Judea*, and it may be were some that did apostatize, and fall to serve the times, to judaize as *Peter* did at this same Church of *Antioch*, *Gal.* 2. 11. *But Peter when he was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed, &c.* But it is evident that one side in the counsel was a party, to wit, them of *Antioch*; Now for this Church, which was a party, and contested against their opposites in a fair way, to be judge in their own cause, and to be juridical upon their antagonists by their own power, cannot equitably nor conscionably be imagined.

SECT. XXXIII.

ANother place of much account to this purpose, and frequently urged by our Brethren is, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. *Neglect not the gift which is in thee, which was given thee by prophesie, with the laying on of the hands*

of

of the Presbytery. Here seems to be two things, a sojourning Eldership, or a collegiat Church, which did ordain *Timothy*, and so a sole power and an exempted authority from the people, by which this great act was done, both which indeed, if they did clearly appear from this place, much of our Brethrens work were done in a little compasse. But as to this place, I have spoken before something in handling the first Assertion. Here I may repeat and adde a little. This Eldership or Presbytery here mentioned could not be an ordinary Eldership, such as consisted of ordinary Pastors & Teachers, and brethren commissioned from severall particular Churches: My ground I have before given, because an ordinary Eldership cannot institute an extraordinary officer, as *Timothy* was, to wit an Evangelist; and then not being an ordinary Eldership, but an Eldership onely of extraordinary officers, not precisely from such

such and such particular Churches, but such as were equally of all, as of any one, 'twill not amount to the nature of a Patern and binding president to build upon.

SECT. XXXIV.

HAving thus pursued the first *medium*, I come now to the next. *That a coercive Eldership, out of the particular Congregation, is a device of man*, for it opposes the Word. For the Scriptures give in their Testimony, not one or two, though these were enough, but in plenty, that what power of ruling jurisdiction, *potestate judicii, donationis*, or the like, an Eldership hath, it hath it in the same extent it hath its Pastorall power, and no further; Yea, that an officers Pastorall power, exceeds in extent his ruling power, rather then his ruling power exceeds his Pastorall power in latitude. To extend a Pastors power of ordinary ruling, beyond the extent of his ordinary teaching, is against the

the order which Christ hath set, and so against the Scripture, and so consequently a sojourning ruling Eldership, doth oppose the Word: That the extent of Church Officers power to rule is no further then the extent of his place, to feed, instruct, and diffuse knowledge and Doctrine, appears by these Scriptures. *Act.* 20. 28. *Take heed to your selves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you over-seers, to feed the flock of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.* There were many officers belonging to this Church of *Ephesus*, some (no doubt) of one kind, some of another, but 'tis manifest here, they were but one flock: And the limite of these is observable, and how, and by what squared, to over-see, and ὁμοιοπαθῶν where they did feed; he joyns these two together, and commensurates one by the other; where men standingly and fixedly feed, and have that limited Call and work upon them,

there

there they are to over-see, use inspection, power, rule, as need requires.

SECT. XXXV.

TO this agreeth 1 *Pet.* 5. 2. *The Elders which are among you I exhort who am also an* [*Elder*] *feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly*, &c. 1 *Pet.* 5. 2. Two things I would note here, that the Apostles, were also Elders, were likewise as extraordinary Officers; and so had the capacity of ordinary Elders, & could manage such a capacity, as wel as the other, as they did in that counsell at *Jerusalem*. Secondly, that feeding, hath limitation --- *Feed the flock of God which is among you*, ἐν ὑμῖν that is, that flock particularly to which any of them had particular relation; *Peter* here writing to the Churches in severall nations, the charge is to the particular officers belonging to these particular Churches: like to that *Col.* 1. 17.

1. 17. *Who is for you a faithfull minister*, &c. That is, your proper Pastor. Now each Officer were to feed their respective flocks, this was the limite of their charge, and this made to commensurate their ruling power, therefore addes .... *taking the oversight thereof, &c. ἐπισκοποῦντες &c.* The flock that was to them particularly limited for each to feed, this and none else was their charge, to rule and order. To this also agreeth *Heb.* 13. 7. *Remember them which have the rule over you, and have spoken to you the word of God, for they watch for your souls, &c.* so that the power of ruling goes no further then the bound of duty to feed: where we are chosen and fixed to feed, to speak the word of God, there are we to rule and exert juridicall power, the use of the Keyes in each part thereof.

SECT. XXXVI.

Ob. IT may be said, Elders may preach in this Church, and that

that; in many particular Churches: therefore they may according to this you have ſaid, rule over many particular Churches.

SECT. XXXVII.

Sol. THis not occaſionall preaching, which one Church by conſent and deſire may admit to another, that the Scriptures fore-mentioned, mean and make the bound of rule; but where mens fixed call and work properly lyes; to what flock I am called to preach and feed; this bounds, and commenſurates, and proportions my power, as an Officer to rule, and to go beyond this, is to go beyond the word, to go againſt this, is to oppoſe the word. And the ſpirit of God, fore-ſeeing ſuch cavils would be made; therefore elſe-where warily ſaith, *Know them that labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admoniſh you*, 1. *Theſſ.* 5. 12. προϊσταμένους *præſidentes*, *proeuntes*, going before,

as

as Military Commanders are commiſſioned over ſuch, and are to go before them, and diſcipline them. So that tis not bare labouring in the Word in a place, which notes an Elder; but being over them, fixed and commiſſioned to ſuch a ſtation over them, and then where this is pitched and bounded, this bounds his work of conduct and diſcipline: for thoſe he is over in the uſe of one Key, thoſe he is over in the uſe of another: this bundle of Keyes is not divided, though diſtinguiſhed: they who are over to inſtruct, theſe are over to ſecond this inſtruction, and none elſe; and theſe, no where elſe over, but under, to wit, at the feet of all the Churches of Chriſt, in love to ſerve them. *Remember them that labour among you*, and are over you, that is, *in word and doctrine*, 1 *Tim.* 1.17. So he expounds it. The Elders which rule well, which labour in word and doctrine. In theſe places, fixed preaching, and fixed ruling go together;

ther; and to part theſe, to rule where we are not fixed and called to preach, is to divide the bunch of Keyes which Chriſt hath joyned and tyed together, which how well Chriſt wil take that, or how well men will uſe that, ſeveral hundred of years in blood and tyranny, hath ſhewed us.

SECT. XXXVIII.

3. THirdly, a ſojourning coercive Elderſhip, is ſurely a device of man, & no inſtituted ordinance of God, becauſe it eludes that end, to which it would ſeem to pretend, which kind of *medium's* God doth not make, unleſs we ſhould charge him with ignorance and folly, which were blaſphemie to do: What inſtruments and ordinances he makes and conſecrates to any end, they are adequate and exquiſite to produce it. That which forrain Elderſhips pretend to (in their ſeveral ranks of ſubordination and preordination, one lower or higher then another)

ther) is, an effectuall remedy of offence, that nothing may be undone, or ill done, as to the relief of any ones complaint, or as to the appointing of any one his right, or any ſociety their right, &c. But now theſe ſojourning Elderſhips, whilſt thus pretending and giving out to the World, do like the Lapwing, draw off Travellers from their Neſt, and from their young: my meaning is, from looking into their nakedneſſe: it takes off people from looking after that which indeed fits, and upon Scripture-grounds may warrant means unto ſuch ends. To ſay, that we have ſo many Learned men in our Synods, and Generall Aſſemblies, and Church-Commiſſions, which are more able to ſearch into things, and to judge of things, then a private Elderſhip of a Congregation is, to hold out mans wiſedome to people, and an arm of fleſh, which much takes poor people, yea, and much prevails upon fleſh and blood, with o-

thers

thers of greater parts, and so indeed is a gaudy Snare. Let Ministers, Doctors, Lords, who will, be in a sojourning Eldership, men of never so much learning, yet the Eldership of the Congregation, is like in reason, to be more learned in the busines of their particular Members which offend, then strangers, because they are eye witnesses of persons and things, and have by intimate conversation, advantage to judge of men, and matters concerning them, more then others who are altogether strangers, and have nothing but at second hand.

SECT. XXXIX.

But secondly, tis good to enquire wisely into this matter, as *Solom.* saith, What is an institution of God, unto such an end; If the power at home in the particular Congregation, be the institution of God for its own affairs, this shall discern better, and judge better, and heal better, then all the Learned Assemblyes in the World, which

which people litle look after, whilst this great noise is made, with men of so great parts and worth, which sojourning Presbyteries assemble withal.

Thirdly, in the nature of the thing, tis a course which cast those which subject to it, upon a multiplication of appeals, and references forth and back; from the Session to the Synod, from the Synod to the Generall Assembly; and when the poor Traveller is there, he is turned over to the Commission of the Kirk, and when come there, turned back again, may be, to the General Assembly; and whether this looks like Scripture ordinance, or like the thing it pretends to, an effectuall removall of burden and offence, whilst it thus worryes poor people up and down, let Christians judge: This is *nequid detrimenti capiant capita Ecclesiæ*: the truth is, this whole frame and *series*, looks more like to entangle and perplexe poor creatures, then effectually to extricat

tricat and issue their distresse, and it may be the cryes of this and such like, is come up into the ears of the Lord, and ah alas, that good men should yet be deaf!

SECT. XL.

FInally, because the particular Church is compleat without them: for God would not appoint useless things. Every particular Congregation rightly constituted and compleated, hath sufficiencie within it self, to exercise all the ordinances of Christ; to ordain, to excommunicate, without forrain Elderships of what degree soever. It is granted by our Bretheren, that such a Church hath this sufficiency in the exercising of some ordinances, as to preach, to dispense the Sacrament, without seeking the consent or help of the Classes: nor were the Church to neglect these, if the Classes should forbid her to do these. Now from themselves we argue, that if this Church thus constituted, have a power

to

to the greater, surely to the lesser. The apostle knew no dispensatiō of so choise an excellency as Preaching, which he prefers before any other; *I was sent to preach the Gospel, not to baptize*; that was the chief part of his errand if Ordination or Excommunication had been of so great eminencie above all other, surely he would have mentioned some one of them.

SECT. XLI.

BUt beside this, thus it might be further said, that the Keys are not divided. The Keys are all given to *Peter*, as personating the Church of Believers in the Gospel, that Kingdom which Christ said he would build: *And I will give unto* [*thee*] *the keyes of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever* [*thou*] *shalt bind on earth &c. Mat.* 16. 19. Surely this particular here used, is not in vain, but to set forth that every Gospel-Church, every particular Congregation of Believers, united as a visible organicall body, for Gods wor-

ship,

ſhip, have ability & power given to it, as to ſuch a great end; they have not a lame Commiſſion, part of the Keyes at their girdle, and ſtrangers and forrainers carrying the other part. And for the Key of Excommunication, which is ſo much denyed to the particular Congregation, the Church of *Corinth* is blamed by the Apoſtle, that they did not this of themſelves without him, and his urging of them, much more without a collegiate Church-ſentence ſent them.

SECT. XLII.

Ob. AGain, this may be added, if it be ſaid, they be fit to preach and adminiſter Seals, but not to ordain or excommunicate, becauſe the particular Churches cannot make up a ſufficient Elderſhip.

SECT. XLIII.

Sol. IT Would be asked here, what makes up a ſufficient Elder-

ſhip. Our brethren ſay, A Presbyterie conſiſts of Paſtors and Teachers, and ſuch other officers as the Word mentions, to be helps in government: now, all theſe may be in a particular Congregation. Though the kind be mentioned in Scripture, yet the number how many of this kind, is not mentioned and limited by the Word. If two or three, or if four or five Elders, or more be needful, to make up an Elderſhip ſufficient, a particular congregation may have and yeeld ſo many upon any occaſion: and a forrain Presbyterie, an Elderſhip over many Congregations, is acknowledged by our Brethren to be ſufficient, though it conſiſts of no more: now if they be a ſufficient Presbyterie, and have the compleat power of ſuch a State, why not the like kind of officers, and the like quantity for number, in the other? Have the Elderſhip that is over many Churches, the ſufficiencie of their State from hence, that they are over

over many Congregations? In the particular Congregation, there are such kinde of Elders, and so many Elders, and all having relation to one Church: And the argument used on the other hand, is the same: that it must be an Eldership, which though it consists of many Congregations, yet makes up but one Church.

SECT. XLIV.

SEcondly, it may be thus said, If one particular Congregation so constituted, as is before mentioned, be not sufficient to exercise the full power of the Keyes, without a fourain Eldership, then the first Church, to wit, that of *Jerusalem*, was lame in its power, till others were erected; and *Antioch* lame in its power, because but one Church in association with it, and answerably they made lame work. And other Congregations which were scattered up and down in *Pontus*, *Cappadocia*, &c. which in all likely-

hood by distance of place, and by violence of Heathens, were in an utter incapacity to any standing, extrinsecall Elderships and associations, looking every hour for the *fierie tryall*, as they did, that all these were lame, and could not supply the mortality of their publick Ministers and Officers, and so consequently must needs sink, from a defect intrinsecall, and in their make and constitution, being not able without a forrain power, to relieve themselves in the maineſt things. And to say, that in extraordinary cases, unordinary things may be done, is little to the satisfaction of a tender heart, especially in divine things, who is apt to beleive, that God hath so shaped his publick Ordinances, which are injoyned, to be used in all places, that places shall not be a standing let, to put his people continually to run beside the instituted ordinary and expresse rule.

SECT.

SECT. XLV.

THirdly, it is confessed by our Brethren, that the Judicatures of Classes and Congregations, do not differ formally or specifically. Then if they differ but only in extension, then the intrinsecall power of the Elders of the Congregation, is the same with the Elder of Classes: and then there is no specificall act that the one puts forth, but the other can put forth too, as occasion shall require, for degree doth not vary the kind; therefore they can ordain or excommunicate, as well as the collegiate Church, and so is the Congregationall Church compleat, if the Classicall Church be.

SECT. XLVI.

FInally, if the particular Church had not been compleat to do its own work, without a forrain Eldership, the Apostles would have mentioned some thing of this forraun com-

binding of Elderships, to ordain, and have counseled the lame, to lend each other a leg; and when this might be had, surely the Church of Christ durst not neglect the use of it; and yet we finde not the one, and we do finde the other: Churches in severall Regions, yet not making any such Regiments one over another. The Apostle *Paul* when he took his leave of the Church of *Ephesus*, commends it not to forrain associate Elders, but both Elders and people as one flock, to the grace of God, *Act.* 20. 32. as leaving it sufficiently endowed, to perpetuate succession in all good, to ordain other Officers if any should die, and so build them up to eternall life.

SECT. XLVII.

Some Objections against the things before handled.

Ob. YOu seem to be for Separation, from a Presbyteriall Church: we finde no example of sepa-

separation, but in case of Idolatry.

SECT. XLVIII.

Sol. IDolatry hath had several shapes according as the light hath broken out in every Age, in severall degrees: The Idolatry of the Heathen in darker times; as *Dagon* that fish and flesh God. The Idolatry of Christians, as a supreme Bishop, over all Churches: and then a supreme Bishop, or Arch Bishop over the Churches in such a Nation: and then because this found out as Papall too such a combination of Bishops, over the Churches in such a Nation: So that that command which is given 2. *Cor.* 6. 17. come out from one kind of Idolatry, is Gods command to come out from all: or else that rule bindes onely, to separate from Heathenish Idolatry. What is not warranted by the Word, is an Idol, let pretext times, and abused affections, call

call it what they will: and though God be mercifull to our simplicity, whilst we are ignorant and mis-call things, yet when things are revealed, tis dangerous to call them, and maintain them, as we please.

SECT. XLIX.

Ob. BUt we have had many converted, under the Presbyterian Government, doth not this seal it to be of God?

SECT. L.

Sol. SO there was under Episcopall Government, yet Presbyterians gave witnesse to that, not to be of God. God blessed the preaching of his Word then by simple hearts, which is his ordinance, and so he hath under Presbyterians; but this must speak *in suâ latitudine*, as a seal of it self, as an ordinance, but not of all mingled with it.

SECT.

SECT. LI.

Ob. BUt many godly being in the Presbyterian way, is it not more proper to purge, then to pull down all; to make use of the root, and not up with root and branch.

SECT. LII.

Sol. TWas just so objected by the godly in *England*, when Presbyterians would have down our Episcopall Church. In *England* many of the godly, yea several Parliament men, were for purging, and circumcising, but by no means could they hear of plucking up root and branch, but the controversie of the Lord meant, the axe to the root, and so I humbly judge, doth the same controversie now mean, which is so wonderfully brought about to Presbyterie, which makes me in all simplicity of heart to give my dear brethren of that judgement, a plain and faithfull warning.

SECT.

SECT. LIII.

SEcondly, this I would answer: purging doth suppose an encouraging foundation to work upon. If a person be dead or hopelesse of life, we do not talk of a purge. Where the forme of Government, or the matter of Government is right, some thing of purging may do the work. As if all be Saints indeed, as far as man can judge, why then though they joumble and disorder some acts of jurisdiction, some purging of Discipline will do it. Or if the forme be right, that there be such a particular company of Saints combined and united, to walk in all the wayes of God together, and to dispense publick ordinances for the building up of one another; and this Church through remissednes let in some that are naught or severall fall into foul sins; why, yet

They return, but not to the most High, Hos. 7 6. *So I doubt, will this kinde of returning be, by purging.*

yet by *remembring* how *they received*, and by repenting, they may by excommunication, and other ordinances purge themſelves: But when matter & form are both corrupt and naught: for forme knit by ſcituation, and by forrain forenſicall Elderſhips, and aſſociations: for matter, three parts of four naught, prophane, Atheiſts, of Elders and people both; how can ſuch a ſtate and conſtitution, which hath not *unde* wherewithal, purge it ſelf? The bad wil caſt out the good, ſooner then they wil condeſcend to caſt out themſelves, when the power is in their own hand, as that it muſt ſtil neceſſarily be, whileſt the major part by far, in all ranks, is the worſt: So that Church State is in this caſe, quite dead; 'tis not a man but a carcaſe; not a Church, but a neſt of unclean birds, a den of theeves: Therefore to depart from the dead is proper; But to talke of purging the dead, where there is not a foundation to

give

give Physick its warmth and operation, is discourse full of weakness, if not of unwillingness to see and censure our own shame: this may seem rigid, but indeed I think, God calls, loudly now to his servants to be plain, and to trust the honour of their candor and ingenuity, with him.

SECT. LIV.

BUt will not my protest serve the turne? If things be corrupt in the Church, and I protest against them, may not I go on with that Church? As for instance: If they take in corrupt Members; and admit corrupt and impenitent communicants; and I protest against these, may not I go on and partake with these, and yet be innocent, and enjoy as much of Gods Presence in the ordinances, as if all were holy and good? For what doth others wickedness in abuse of ordinances, prejudice those ordinances to me?

SECT.

SECT. LV.

Sol. IF proteſting were onely words? then ſuch a thing would do. But to ſay the precious ſhould not mingle with the vile, and yet the man doth thus dayly & continually, is not to proteſt but to mock, and diſſemble; becauſe here is not a pure paſſiveneſs in this man, as to the going on of that thing which he proteſts againſt. Again, in practical things, tis not ſo much a mans word as his practice, which gives the diſlike. If a man of an idolatrous Church, ſhould ſtand up & proteſt againſt the Maſſe, and yet ſtill go to Maſſe, I doubt how well this would pleaſe God, or deliver him from guilt. *Naaman* implicitely proteſts againſt the idolatry he had practiſed, that he would worſhip no God, but the God of Iſrael: and did he continue to bow down? Yes, ſaith ſome, but he begs Pardon for it, as fearing how 'twould hold. But moſt

apt in our last *English* Annot. The word being rendred in the time past: Pardon that I bowed my self in the house of *Rimmon*: Protesting is a piece of revenge, which is the vehemence of Repentance, and the clearing of ones self, which how this will accord with halting and halving, is worthy of deep thoughts of heart: Can two walk together except they be agreed. And our Brethren, when they protest against an Assembly, do not submit to it.

SECT. LVI.

Ob. BUt doth not Baptisme give the form of a true Church: And you say, If the forme and foundation be right, it may be capable to purge it self right: Now we are all baptized.

SECT. LVII.

Sol. THat Baptisme doth not give the forme of Church Member-

bership, is manifest by these Arguments: First, because there may be a Church, and so consequently members of a Church before Baptisme: Ministers are before Baptisme, and a Church is before Ministers, for out of it are they made, and have their Keyes, as hath been shewed; That Ministers are before Baptisme is evident, or else Baptisme may be administred by such who are not Officers, by any of the Members, and then what need Officers: And then a Church essentially, is a Church compleat organically, and yet no officer or organ in it. Secondly, the Church was visible when there was no Seal, neither Circumcision, nor Baptisme, and then how could these constitute a Church? Besides how much this gratifies the judgement and practice of Anabaptists, any one may see, who constitute Church Members by Baptisme, and how much Presbyterians are against Anabaptists, all their writ-

ings shew, and how much they lay to our charge for ushering in, and countenancing this tenent.

Ob. BUt since this opinion prevailed, we see a vast tolleration of all strange and damnable doctrines.

Sol. We are willing to be a terrour to evill works, and as unwilling to be a terrour to good. We are not so well skilled in divine things, as to tell what every thing is in the bud; we are patient more then some would have us, till the bud blossom and bear, and when we see the fruit naught, upon all occasions, we give our witness against it, by dispute, discountenance, and otherwise as we understand the Word to warrant us. If Tares and Wheat must grow together in the World, till the end thereof, the Civill Magistrate had need to be wary, how he useth his Sword for a Weed-hook, *in maculis mentis*, spots of the mind, lest Presbyterie get a by-blow amongst

amongst the rest. Some mens weapons to fight in these quarrels, are to us as *Sauls* Armour was to *David*, too big and too heavy, we cannot tell how to wield them; and because we take a little stone and a sling, when others would have us take a halter and a cross, do we then give a vast tollera-tion? Not by might nor by power Civil, but by Gods Spirit in his Word and other Ordinances we fight in these quarrels, which weapons, though not so terrible to look upon, as the temporall Sword, yet are mighty through God to cast down strong imaginations of vain men: Order yet is but making to in Church and State, and therefore things are yet but disorderly in this Nation: Warres make Lawes mute.

SECT. LVIII.

FInally Christians, take this answer to all that may be further objected. To be inquiring is honour-

able

ple, but to be *ever learning and never practising* is dangerous: 'Twas a heavy curse that *Jeremiah* wished upon himself, that his *mothers womb might have been alwayes great with him, Jer.* 20. 17. Tis a heavy curse indeed upon that poor soul, concerning whom it may be said, the womb of Truth is alwayes great with him, alwayes in pangs and throwes with him, but cannot bring forth.

FINIS.